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The Editors
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APRIL 8, 1983

EDUCATION ISSUE 1983

Does free exercise stop at the schoolhouse door?
The Supreme Court dodges the issue

Ideology & tuition tax credits
Who cares about consistency?

America's math & science gap
Everyone has a different remedy

What would you recommend?
Theology teachers answer a reader's query

Simone Weil on education • Sports & schools • Teaching writing

Reviews: **Dan Herr on Thomas More • Colin L. Westerbeck, Jr. • Margaret O'Brien Steinfels**

First, Harper's *magazine brought you 'If Orwell Were Alive Today' by Norman Podhoretz. Now read 'If Norman Podhoretz Were Alive Today' by George Orwell. . . .*

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Correspondence

Tom Powers, farewell

Battle Creek, Mich.

To the Editors: Thomas Powers says "Farewell" [Mar. 11]. Though we have never met face-to-face, I have enjoyed his *Commonweal* comradeship.

I sympathize with his feeling of powerlessness. We may indeed be at the edge of civility's collapse—an age darker, more anxious, and more destructive than when our ancestors escaped to barren rocks along Europe's Atlantic coast. But for all of us—who struggle with burnouts, bills, uncertain careers, growing kids, and this age's global anxieties—I hope he returns to these pages with his sensitive word and well-crafted phrase.

He has been a compassionate companion. No small achievement in this day of disequilibrium.

JACK DICK

I will miss . . .

Napa, Calif.

To the Editors: As a fellow Johnson-lover, I will miss Thomas Powers, though not for his conversational abilities, which I am sure I would enjoy if I were ever to meet him. I will miss his utterly lucid explanations of nuclear weaponry which, because of the way I use my own discretionary reading time, constitute almost the only reliable information I have on the subject. I will miss him—his knowledge and his sanity—and the same must be true for the mass of *Commonweal* subscribers, who are indicating by their continued support of the magazine that they value such writers as Powers.

BARRY GILL

Great sense of loss

Rochester, N.Y.

To the Editors: I've just read Thomas Power's "By Way of Farewell; with a great sense of loss, [Mar. 11]. I do respect his reasons for stopping the column; in fact the intellectual integrity and courage that are behind his decision are exactly the qualities that have made his column extraordinary. He has never accepted facile or wish-fulfilling solutions to the deadly problems he has so boldly taken it upon himself to confront. Even when close to despair, as he has sometimes sounded (wholly justifiably), he has kept a clear head and a sense of decency and fairness about his subjects.

Powers's column has been one of the reasons that I've kept renewing my subscription to *Commonweal*. I certainly won't stop renewing now; but I hope he'll let us regular readers hear from him again in *Commonweal* from time to time.

PEGGY ROSENTHAL

Religious commitment

Hershey, Pa.

To the Editors: In his column on contemporary religious problems and the attraction of cults for young people [Feb. 25], John Garvey does not specify the key element in any religious system—commitment. Young people are attracted to cults led by charismatic leaders who ask for nothing less than total commitment and blind devotion. Many established mainstream Protestant groups in contrast, ask little, and offer a "feel good" brand of comfortable religious humanism that has been rejected by many youths in search of an ideal. Catholicism requires strong commitment but it has been largely to binding ecclesiastical norms: the church, papal infallibility, Mass on Sunday, prohibitions on artificial birth control — features which rebellious young people are inclined to ignore.

Garvey pinpoints the problem — "Ego can convert absolutely anything to its own uses, . . ." The phenomenal growth shown by evangelical Christian sects indicates a hunger for total commitment and the guarantees offered of salvation to the "born-again." However, what is required is the willingness to suspend the evidence of science for the fundamentalist's interpretation of scripture.

Garvey seems to find authenticity in the Christianity of two Orthodox mentioned in his article, one a monk and the other a bishop. He also advises ". . . that we should seek the deepest roots of the wisdom of our tradition." In Eastern Christianity's tradition, commitment is invited in the Divine Liturgy of St. John Chrysostom when the petition is made ". . . let us commend ourselves and one another and our whole lives to Christ our God."

Does not being a Christian involve awakening to this straightforward commitment?

JOYCE D. KALES

A query answered

New York, N.Y.

To the Editors: You have flattered me by expressing public wonderment about my opinions [Editorial, "Sane Center or Just Anti-Left? Mar. 11]. Not about all of them, alas, only my opinions on two discrete items: "What does Mr. Finn think of the nuclear-war-as-divine-punishment-for-abortion approach that we previously described" or "another article . . . which attributes the post-Vatican II removal of bad religious art from churches to the 'heresy of Modernism' enjoying 'Satanic assistance'?"

Now I recognize that an expression of wonderment is not yet a request for enlightenment, but I was immediately ready to regard it as such. Unfortunately, I had not read one of the articles referred to. Having now repaired my ignorance, I can respond to your question briefly: "Not much." Although I am critical of both abortion and antiseptic churches I

(Continued on page 222)

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A NEW KIND OF PAC

YOUR FRIENDLY neighborhood banker plus all his big brothers has managed to see that Congress was deluged with a flood of letters, all protesting the law making a ten percent withholding on interest and dividends mandatory. Many of these letters were based on misleading advertising by the banks. The size of the popular outpouring has clearly scared Congress — more than 300 out of the 435 members of the House and more than half of the senators signed up as co-sponsors of the amendment to the jobs bill that would have repealed the interest/dividends withholding measure.

Later another attempt was made to attach a similar amendment to the social security bill. Almost overlooked in the confusion caused by the banking campaign against the measure was the fact that this was not a new tax imposed on anyone, as many imagined, but a withholding of tax that is owed anyway and in too many cases is being evaded at a cost to the government that runs into the billions — and at the expense of other taxpayers who pay their fair share. Mail from constituents accounts for a good deal of the support the banks are getting on this issue. But the suspicion will not down that lurking behind the banking industry's success with Congress lies the undeniably difficult problem of the political action committees. Upholders of the withholding measure say that large contributions from the banking PACs are a major factor in the repeal effort. As they point out, the banking industry's political efforts make it one of the nation's most significant political contributors. There are more than four hundred PACs organized by banking and savings institutions, and ninety percent of the members of Congress received money from them in the past two years, although the author of the amendment to kill withholding did not. No one can say any member of Congress would not have sided with the banks on this issue if they had not received PAC banking money, but it is hard to believe the contributions hurt in what Senator Bob Dole, Republican aspirant for the presidency and chairman of the Senate Finance Committee, called the "most massive campaign in history to intimidate Congress."

How important were bank PAC contributions? Representative Fernand J. St. Germain is chairman of the House Banking Committee and a leading opponent of tax withholding; according to the *New York Times* he received $53,150 — more than a fifth of the total campaign contributions for his 1982 campaign. In the Senate, Donald W. Riegle Jr., a senior Democrat on the Banking Committee and a leading opponent of withholding, took in $82,207 — the highest amount of any member of Congress although only five percent of Senator Riegle's reelection effort. Granted, withholding on interest and dividends is a hot issue, as the mail indicates, and again there is no reason to say that these men would not have taken the stand they did if there were no PAC banking money. But wouldn't they and the rest of us feel more comfortable if they could say they had not taken a dime from the banking industry?

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In the abstract there is nothing essentially wrong with the idea of PACs. They are committees set up by corporations, unions, trade associations, and organizations of like-minded people to lobby for particular political causes, surely a legitimate part of the democratic process. In a way quite unintended PACs received their big impetus from the reform laws of the 1970s. This legislation, among their other things, put limits on what individuals could contribute to federal candidates. This provision in turn promoted political action committees which pool the contributions of smaller donors, from union members and doctors and lawyers to trade associations and corporations. This sounds fair enough on first hearing. In fact, the PACs have simply got out of hand. Proliferating like rabbits, they have poured far more money into political campaigns than has ever been spent before. Already there are more than three thousand PACs, as compared with barely over a hundred in 1972. Big money is involved. House GOP leader Robert Michel of Illinois, for example, received more than $200,000 from various PACs for his last campaign — and at that he just managed to beat his relatively unknown contender. The interests of doctors and hospitals are well looked after in Congress; the American Medical Association invested $2,400,000 in the 1982 congressional elections. Just short of 1500 corporate PACs made total contributions of $30,000,000, while 350 union PACs came up with $20,000,000. Republican Senator Orrin Hatch of Utah must be the biggest PAC-man of them all; he was on the receiving end of $750,000 from assorted PACs. Perhaps the best way to sum the matter up is to cite the quote in *Time* magazine from Democratic Representative Thomas Downey of New York's Long Island: "You can't buy a Congressman for $5,000 (the most a single PAC can give to one candidate). But you can buy his vote. It's done on a regular basis."

It's easy enough, then, to see that PACs pose a growing problem for the American system of representative democracy. What is not so easy is to see exactly what to do about them, although there is currently some sentiment in Congress to try. As was discovered after passage of the current campaign-financing laws, reformers must beware unforeseen pitfalls. In 1976, for example, the Supreme Court ruled that it was unconstitutional to limit what an individual or his family could invest in a campaign. If candidates are simply limited in their access to PAC or other campaign-financing, will we see an even greater proliferation of millionaire candidates who come close to buying their seats outright?

Then there is the problem of the so-called "negative" campaigns of smear and slander. Despite the $5,000 limit on what an individual PAC can give to one candidate, there is no limit on what a PAC can spend on a negative campaign, as long as there is no direct link between it and the candidate it seeks to benefit. Thus in the last election Maryland's Democratic Senator Paul Sarbanes was the target of a $650,000 negative campaign mounted against him by the National Conservative Political Action Committee, known as Nickpac, which in 1980

PAYING ATTENTION

SIMONE WEIL ON EDUCATION

DEBATES ABOUT the "what" of education very quickly pose questions about the "why" of education. Yet educators, even Catholic educators, often appear to be at a loss when faced with inquiries into the basic purposes of the enterprise in which they are engaged. They would do well, I believe, to look at an essay included in Simone Weil's autobiographical *Waiting for God* (Harper Colophon Book, $4.95). The essay is called "Reflections on the Right Use of School Studies with a View to the Love of God."

The title itself is arresting, as are the facts in the life of this unusual woman. She was a mystic, a philosopher, a writer and teacher, a Jew by birth and a Roman Catholic by conviction, but one who refused on principle to be baptized. Her vocation to solidarity with the suffering and the alienated led her to believe that she should remain an "outsider" rather than "enter" the church. Following this same vocation, she became both a field and factory worker in France, and experienced the utter calamity of war in a few brief weeks in 1936 on the front with the Republican army in Spain. Although she suffered all of her life from ill health, especially violent migraine headaches, she died at the age of thirty-four of what may be called voluntary starvation. One might expect some interesting views from such a woman.

After repeated attempts, I have given up hope of capturing all the leading ideas of what is, after all, only an eleven-page essay on studies. It is not only that Weil deals

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claimed credit for defeating Democratic Senators George McGovern of South Dakota, Frank Church of Idaho, Birch Bayh of Indiana, and John Culver of Iowa. Senator Sarbanes managed to win, in spite of smear and slander, but only by himself raising and spending a small fortune, and it is suggested that one answer to such PAC negative campaigns is for Congress to mandate free television and radio time for the victim to respond to all charges against him.

An obvious reform that should be enacted speedily is to put a top limit — say $75,000 — on the amount of PAC money any one candidate can receive. And raising the amount individuals can contribute to political campaigns with tax deductibility would have the good effect of strengthening the role of the political parties now weakened by the PACs. Such measures would help. But the heart of any answer to the PAC problem is public financing for congressional campaigns. Presidential primary campaigns are now only partially financed through private money, including PACs, and the final and crucial race itself is publicly financed. Congressional races would benefit from the same solution. The only trouble with this is that sitting legislators would have to vote for legislation which might benefit a future challenger to their seats. Haloes being in short supply in Congress, this will require a popular mail and telegram campaign even greater than that mounted by the banks on the withholding issue. In short, what may be called for in this case is not a corporate PAC or a union PAC or a trade association PAC but a great people's political action committee — in other words, a Pop-PAC. If it could be managed, that would be a PAC to bank on.

FOR THE SPORT OF IT

We can't remember when we ran an editorial on the sporting scene — which surely means that we are neglecting a large slice

in extreme statement or paradox — which she surely does — but her short essay is simply too packed, the ideas too intricately related, and the concepts too rich to be summarized or paraphrased, at least in the space available here. Some hints, however, may be tantalizing enough to entice others to ponder the essay for themselves.

If school studies are being pursued with "a view to the love of God," (and that notion is itself not common), the sole interest and real object of them is to develop the faculty of attention. Weil dismisses, one after another, all of the usual motives, and incentives for studying: to pass examinations, win honors, get good grades, etc. (It doesn't occur to her to mention getting a job.) Nor is it important to have a natural taste or aptitude for what is being studied; in fact it is an advantage not to. Even the interest intrinsic to the subject being studied is secondary to developing the faculty of attention. Why then, is this faculty stressed so insistently and without qualification by Weil as *the* value of studying?

The reason that she gives for her position is intriguing. It is that *prayer* consists of attention; it is its substance. "The quality of attention counts for much in the quality of prayer." The power of attention developed in studies will be available at the time of prayer. So that, no matter what the "result" of study, in the normal use of that word, whether a solution to a problem is found or not, no effort at attention is ever wasted because "the result will one day be discovered in prayer." In other words, school studies with a view to the love of God are a preparation for the gift of prayer. If one pursues them with this intention — and with humility.

To grasp how and why Weil relates attention to prayer, everything depends on understanding what she means by attention. She does not mean contracting your muscles, holding your breath, and knitting your brow. Nor does she mean the exercise of sheer will power. The attention she is describing consists of waiting, watching, of suspending thought. It requires the "negative effort" of leaving the mind empty and ready to be penetrated by the object. The student is not to set out on a search, but to be ready to receive naked truth. And this attitude is to be cultivated not only when engaging in philosophic speculation, but in doing a geometry problem (her favorite example), or translating a Latin text. This kind of attention is difficult and even more repugnant to "something in the soul" than fatigue is to the body. It becomes clear at this point — and she says a good bit more — that all of the expressions used above fit the classical descriptions of the attitude of spirit required for contemplation.

But that is not all. "Not only does the love of God have attention for its substance; the love of our neighbor, which we know to be the same love, is made of this same substance. Those who are unhappy have no need for anything in this world but people capable of giving them their attention. The capacity to give one's attention to a sufferer is a very rare and difficult thing; it is almost a miracle, it *is* a miracle. Nearly all those who think they have this capacity do not possess it. Warmth of heart, impulsiveness, pity are not enough." To give this kind of attention means being able to say to our neighbor: "What are you going through?" And it is enough but indispensable to know how to look at a person in a certain way: with attention, empty of oneself, ready to receive the one being looked at, just as he or she is, in all individual, particular truth, and not "as a unit in a collection, or as a specimen from a social category labeled 'unfortunate.'"

Weil's essay, brief as it is, says a lot about humility, desire, joy, evil in the soul, light, truth-Truth, love of God and neighbor, compassion. What strange and provocative words for us to read in a piece about education. I call it to your "attention."

NANCY M. MALONE

(Sister Nancy M. Malone, O.S.U., writes in the areas of theology, spirituality, campus ministry, and higher education.)

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of American life. How better to begin to repair that omission than by a comment on the case of Herschel Walker, and where better for that to appear than in an Education Issue?

For those of you who depend on journals like this one to give you vital information and thus don't know, we should tell you who Mr. Walker is. He is, or was, the outstanding star of the University of Georgia powerhouse football team, a star who catapulted himself into ineligibility by signing a professional contract with the United States Football League. The U.S.F.L. is a fledgling operation that is determined to prevent the country from forgetting about football for a few months after Superbowl Sunday. The dominant National Football League has made it official policy to let the colleges nurture football talent for four years before signing them up; the U.S.F.L. has said it will abide by the same self-regulation. But as new kid on the block scrapping for big TV money, it needs stars in the worst way—and so it promptly broke its own rule against signing underclassmen, luring Herschel Walker into a three-year contract at, would you believe, a million and a half a year—a sum that makes Mr. Walker by far the highest paid player in the history of professional football. The situation was complicated by the fact that Mr. Walker changed his mind after initially signing his contract, and denied to reporters that he had signed. This caused a considerable brouhaha, but eventually he decided to go ahead with the pros. He is now officially ineligible to play with any college or university team, and heated denunciations have been leveled at him inside and outside of Georgia ever since for his perfidy in giving up his amateur status.

Our sympathies are all on Mr. Walker's side. As Mark Naison pointed out in an article in our Sept. 24, 1982 issue, big-time college athletics are in a scandalous state. Educational standards are too often ignored, student athletes are crassly exploited, and illegal recruiting practices are now standard features of revenue-producing sports programs at many colleges and universities. Given a chance at big television money, it is hard for a school to resist temptation, and much of the top-name sports structure rests on the backs of plantation field hands technically known as students. In really scandalous cases the exploited student athlete—often, like Mr. Walker, a black—emerges from college after years of total athletic participation almost illiterate and with nothing but scars to show for his efforts.

Revenue-producing sports have become big business for many colleges and universities, with the take from television rights and stadium revenues an important part of their budget. If students like Mr. Walker also start to look on sports as a business, who can blame them? Given the present situation, what price amateurism? Why shouldn't Herschel Walker sign to play football for money instead of "fun" before a possible injury permanently sidelines him? And if a million and a half dollars a year seems like a lot for a man to carry a pigskin once a week, well, that's another question and another editorial.

WE'RE ONLY QUOTING

Well, *they* said it . . . at a party thrown by *National Review* to introduce Washington to the conservative journal's new Washington editor, John McLaughlin, a man who in an earlier existence as a Jesuit and a speechwriter for Richard Nixon was known as the conservatives' answer to Father Drinan.

Honoring the party by his presence was Ronald Reagan. The president was introduced by syndicated columnist Joseph Sobran in the following manner: "Mr. President, we have the deepest faith in your character and determination, but we want you to know that should you ever falter, should you ever have a moment of weakness or, Heaven forbid, compassion, John is here to support you, to back you up, to keep you the same rigid, supply-side, free-market, Red-baiting ideologue we have come to know and love."

Adds the published record of the festivities: "[*Laughter and applause.*]"

Of several minds: *John Garvey*

IF NORMAN PODHORETZ WERE ALIVE TODAY

A CONVERSATION WITH GEORGE ORWELL

THERE ISN'T MUCH to do in my home town on weekends, so I've taken to visiting alternate universes. You may have heard of them: there are universes in which the Spanish Armada was victorious. In which your grandmother married someone other than your grandfather. In which Ronald Reagan ended his career as an obscure movie stuntman, following that scandal with the Great Dane. Travel between alternate universes isn't easy and mail is spotty, but once you get the hang of it moving from one world to another is quite enjoyable.

When I travel like this, I often take a few months' worth of magazines to a back table in a bar in one pleasant alternate universe. It's a little place George Orwell praised in one of his essays, a lovely pub called The Moon Under Water. It doesn't exist in our universe — Orwell's essay was a lament for its absence — but Orwell (who is still alive in about a third of the alternate universes I've been to) was delighted to find it every bit as good as he had imagined it to be, though the publican does take his time getting around to your order.

One Saturday afternoon as I sat at my table I noticed a *Harper's* cover story by

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Norman Podhoretz, editor (in our universe, anyway) of *Commentary* and a prominent neoconservative. The title was "If Orwell Were Alive Today." Through selective quotations and the creative use of ellipses, Podhoretz had transformed Orwell, a dedicated socialist and a man horrified at the use of atomic weapons, into a man who, if he were alive today, would think very much like . . . well, like Norman Podhoretz. Orwell, according to Mr. Podhoretz, would conclude that democracy could be preserved only by a Reaganite foreign policy and a reliance on nuclear weapons. I was thinking that it was silly to conjecture about what a man dead for 33 years would think if he were alive today, and both humorless and pretentious to assume that he would think exactly as you do, when I noticed Orwell himself making his way through the smoky air of the pub. He was heading for my table. Of course Orwell was aware that in several alternative universes he had died, but I thought the cover of *Harper's* might upset him. I hastily pushed it under a copy of *Commentary*.

"Eric!" I said, rising. (We are on first name terms.) He smiled, nodded, sat down, and made no move to order a drink. I had come to know what this meant — I had to buy. I ordered two gin-and-tonics. When I turned back to the table, Orwell was looking at the cover of *Commentary*.

"Is that the one you write for?" he asked.

"No," I said, "*Commonweal* . . . WEAL!"

"Ah, now I remember. *Commentary* is the one that used to be edited by what's his name, a bright, ambitious young fellow."

"Norman Podhoretz."

'Right. It was an exciting magazine when he was editor," Orwell said.

I nodded agreement. "Everyone read it when I was in college."

"I wonder what might have happened with Podhoretz if he had lived." Orwell said. "I could see a definite direction there."

"Oh?"

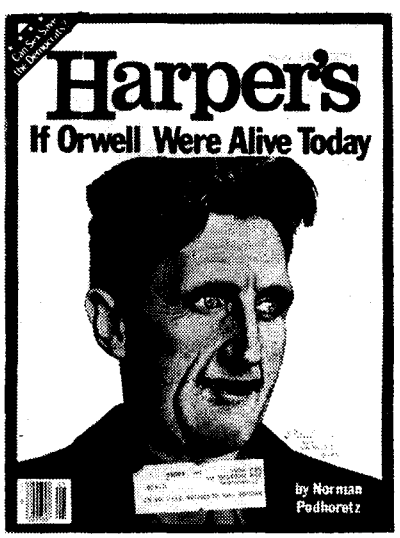
"Yes. You know he was quite a standard, middle-of-the-road liberal for awhile, but Vietnam made a difference. It soured his earlier qualified support for American policy in Southeast Asia. He even said he would prefer to see an unambiguous American defeat rather than the continued bombardment of that poor devastated region. And then there was his sympathy with religion. something I was never able to understand."

The Catholic Forum, will sponsor Bruce Russett, principal consultant to the Bishops Committee on War & Peace, speaking on the pastoral letter, April 14, 8 p.m. St. Joseph's School/Farrell Hall, 111 Washington Place, Manhattan, NY.

"Really?" I was surprised. "I always found Podhoretz secular through and through."

"Oh, he usually was in his own writings, all right. But he *was* editor of *Commentary*, after all, and he published several articles by Gershom Scholem and other scholars of religion. And then there were a fair number of articles on the relationship between Christianity and Judaism. No, it's clear religion was never far from his mind. I suspect there was a developing fascination with Catholicism. You know, articles about the relationship between Rome and Judaism, Irishmen appearing in the pages of *Commentary* — Harrington, of course, with his Catholic Worker background, and someone named O'Gara . . ."

"I still don't quite see the direction," I said. "He soured on the war in Vietnam — maybe even on war in general — the horrible effects of bombing seemed to come as a sort of surprise to him. And maybe there was a latent interest in religion, though I'm not sure about that. I still don't see what you're driving at."



"I'm not through yet," Orwell said. "Where are those drinks?" I signaled the publican, who nodded and moved toward the gin.

"Well," Orwell continued, "there was that piece called 'Speak of the Devil' in the April, 1971, *Commentary*. 'God," Podhoretz wrote, 'commands us to be fruitful and multiply. . . . The Devil . . . does not command us to be fruitful and multiply. . . . He exists for the purpose of tempting or seducing as many of God's creatures as he can into a refusal to choose the breeding of life. . . . Would he not . . . be pleased with the size and condition of his American flock? Could even he with all his cunning have ever dreamed that so many would come to preach sterility and even to sterilize their very own selves in the name of a greater piety toward nature, a greater sense of responsibility to the future, and a greater reverence for life?' "

"You have a very good memory," I said.

"Thanks."

"But aren't those a lot of ellipses I hear you slipping in there?"

Orwell waved the objection aside. "Writers do that all the time. Anyway, doesn't that quote remind you of someone?"

"No," I said, getting a little impatient.

Orwell leaned forward and looked at me intensely. He was about to make his point. "Doesn't it," he said, "remind you of the thinking of the late Pope Paul VI?"

Suddenly the pieces began to fall into place: a reaction against war, a religious direction, an opposition to sterilization and by implication to contraception, the resemblance to Paul VI . . .

"Are you saying Podhoretz is the man who would be pope?"

"No," said Orwell, "despite the evidence of *Making It*. But I do think . . ."

Then it struck me. "You mean . . ."

"Yes," said George Orwell. "If Norman Podhoretz were alive today, he would be a Catholic pacifist."

JOHN GARVEY

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Does free exercise stop at the schoolhouse door?

ELLIOTT WRIGHT

THE SUPREME COURT of the United States is an inscrutable power that in its own mind may understand how it selects the cases it reviews. To an outsider, the justices' higher reasoning is at times confusing. The Court both asserts and flinches, and by refusing certain cases often compounds or prolongs legal uncertainties. It flinched in January by declining an appeal on "voluntary" student religious groups in public schools.

Never has the High Court addressed the constitutionality of truly voluntary religious activities at state-supported secondary and elementary schools, an issue at controversy in communities all over the country. The contest in part pits the First Amendment's "no establishment" clause against "free exercise," and lower courts are having trouble reaching a balance between the two. In *Lubbock Independent School District* v. *Lubbock Civil Liberties Union,* the Supreme Court was asked to review a Fifth Circuit Court of Appeals decision prohibiting off-hour prayer and Bible study in the schools of the Texas city. By refusing, the Court missed a chance to do its job of adjudicating constitutional disputes, this one made politically hotter by the Court's cold shoulder.

The legal record on religion in public educational institutions is not easy to see these days through the smoke around the proposed "prayer amendment." But nothing can obscure the fact that the *Lubbock* issue is not answered by the Supreme Court's landmark rulings on prayer and Bible reading in the 1960s. This was conceded by the Fifth Circuit in *Lubbock* and highlighted in an *amici* (friends) brief filed jointly in the case by the National Council of Churches and the United Presbyterian Church, neither of which is friendly to the "prayer amendment."

In the 1960s the Court was concerned with governmentally required or sponsored religious exercises in public schools. While taking a dim view of classroom prayer made voluntary by excusing dissenters, the decisions contain not one iota on voluntary, non-school-sponsored groups using public space before or after school hours. Yet one stream of legal interpretation, found in the Fifth Circuit ruling in *Lubbock,* has for twenty years fantasized that the Supreme Court outlawed any public school acknowledgment of religion as anything more than a possible academic subject, probably in the history curriculum.

Now, if in 1983 the High Court wants to embrace the proposition that free exercise stops at the schoolhouse gate it should take a Lubbock-like case and say so boldly; of course, it might find the task legally messy. The Court would find it necessary to explain why political free speech is more protected than free religious exercise since in a 1959 opinion (*Tinker* v. *Des Moines*) it held that high school students do not "shed their rights to freedom of speech or expression" upon entering a public school. It would have to come up with a good rationale for why high school seniors do not enjoy the same rights as college freshmen. Last year in a Missouri case (*Widner* v. *Vincent*) the justices upheld the right of religious groups to meet on state-supported college and university campuses: free exercise and equal access would be violated should public institutions allow political science clubs but not religious organizations.

The Court could be reasonably expected to show how voluntary religious groups in Lubbock differ from weekly prayer meetings held by the Joint Chiefs of Staff. Yes, they pray in the Pentagon. And what about the military chaplains? The justification for a federally-funded chaplaincy has always been that military life takes citizens out of normal communities; therefore, government must provide religious ministries not otherwise available. That happens to make sense, but it must be noted, that, first, military service today is voluntary and, second, the chaplaincy comes much closer to an establishment of religion than would after-hour Bible classes in Lubbock.

In fairness to the Supreme Court, however, one must not assume the justices meant to say anything by declining *Lubbock.* To let the Fifth Circuit opinion stand is not to affirm it. The matter is not judicially closed, and perhaps the Court is

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waiting for a better test case. The Lubbock litigation does have a murky background (but so do many other cases the Court takes).

The school board in the Panhandle city seems to have ignored the Supreme Court's earlier rulings on government sponsorship of public school devotionals. As late as 1979, the Bible was read daily over public address systems, teachers led prayers and a time of silent meditation was ended with a piped-in "amen." Fifth and sixth graders got Gideon Bibles.

When the local Civil Liberties Union moved to stop such practices, the board hemmed and hawed and finally came up with a new policy covering several aspects of religion in public education. One rubric allowed teaching "about" religion and the Bible; another banned oral prayer and devotional reading of Scriptures, though school administrators were given permission to "set aside a short period for silent thought or meditation by students during the day."

The ensuing opposition to the new policy focused not on the silent meditation provision but on Paragraph 4, which stated:

> The school board permits students to gather at the school with supervision either before or after regular hours on the same basis as other groups as determined by the school administration to meet for any educational, moral, religious or ethical purpose so long as attendance at such meetings is voluntary.

The Lubbock Civil Liberties Union asked a federal district court to block implementation of the new policy. The judge found the plan as a whole sufficiently neutral with respect to religion, striking "the correct balance between the First Amendment's mandate against governmental establishment of religion and its protection of the free exercise of religion." He did not share the LCLU's particular objections to Paragraph 4.

In March, 1982, the Fifth Circuit appellate court, giving special attention to the paragraph, reversed the district, primarily because it did not like the "context" in which the provisions for religious group meetings were articulated. The fact of Paragraph 4 in a general policy statement on religion in public schools was said to promote religious meetings and, therefore, to serve no secular purpose. In other words, the appellate judges were fearful that the Lubbock policy was made by school board members with bowed heads and hands on the Bible.

The circuit opinion honestly said that "neither the Supreme Court nor the appellate courts have addressed precisely the question before us." As close as it could come to a precedent was *Brandon* v. *Board of Education* heard in 1980 by the Second Circuit. Brandon was brought by parents unhappy with a school district's refusal to allow voluntary religious organizations before or after school. Plaintiffs argued that such meetings *must* be allowed to safeguard free speech. The Brandon court allowed that extra-curricular activities fostering free speech clearly serve a good end but it upheld the school board. It was not sure that free speech encompasses religious groups meeting at schools after buses arrive in the a.m. or before they depart in the p.m.

The Fifth Circuit recognized differences between *Brandon* and *Lubbock* (the second did not hinge on what a school district must do or on the free speech issue), yet agreed with the Brandon court that even "the mere appearance" of school involvement in religious activities may indicate to an "impressionable student" that "the state has placed its imprimatur on a particular religious creed." The Fifth Circuit approvingly quoted the Second in a classic statement of judicial overkill:

> An adolescent may perceive "voluntary" school prayer in a different light if he were to see the captain of the school's football team, the student body president, or the leading actress in a dramatic production participating in communal prayer meetings in the "captive audience" setting of a school (O'Hair v. Andrus, 613 F 2d . . . Cir. 1970) . . . Misconceptions over the appropriate roles of church and state learned during one's school years may never be corrected.

(And maybe the captain of the public school football team should be prohibited from all communal prayer in the "captive audience" settings of small towns and urban neighborhoods. Do courts think students relate only at school?)

BOTH *Lubbock* and *Brandon* represent stabs in the legal dark, stumbling and searching for support. The Supreme Court has an obligation to hear a *Lubbock*-style case, and hope for one with a "cleaner" background is the only legitimate reason for refusing the appeal from the Fifth Circuit.

That the question in *Lubbock* begs for a Supreme Court review cannot be doubted on judicial or political grounds. A bevy of similar cases are in process, and the issue is a political time bomb. Many Americans — not all of them fundamentalists — believe that the courts are determined not only to "expel" God from the classroom but also to bar any public school recognition that religion exists. Disgust with totally secular education is one reason for the proliferation of "Christian schools" across the land and may help to explain why Catholic parochial school enrollment has increased modestly in some areas.

The political dimensions prompted twenty-four senators — Democratic, Republican, liberal, and conservative — to ask the Supreme Court to consider *Lubbock*. The Fifth Circuit decision, said the group, was causing "the widespread perception that the lower federal courts are interpreting the Constitution in a way that is hostile to religion." The senators also blusteringly reminded the justices of proposals to strip courts

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of the power to exercise authority over certain First Amendment matters, including school prayer.

The Supreme Court should not quake at threats from one-fourth of the Senate; at the same time, should it sit in silence as the "no establishment" and "free exercise" clauses are used against each other in legal forums and everybody's political experience? Given the system, only the High Court can finally decide whether voluntary student religious groups in public schools pass constitutional muster. If not — if pluralism demands total dereligionized public education — the Court has a duty to sanction and explain the conclusion, thus giving families the choice of keeping children in "religionless" institutions or opting out of public education.

In the meantime, the debate over the *Lubbock* issue within organized religion may not follow the polarized "liberal" and "conservative" positions characteristic of the controversy over the "prayer amendment." Some significant part of the more liberal churches that generally oppose classroom prayer (oral or silent) are likely to side with advocates of voluntary student religious groups. As mentioned above, the National Council of Churches and the United Presbyterian Church, both opposed to the "prayer amendment," filed a brief asking the Supreme Court to settle *Lubbock* in favor of the school board.

The joint brief, written by Edward M. Gaffney, Jr., of the Center for Constitutional Studies at the University of Notre Dame, argued that *Lubbock* afforded the High Court an opportunity to "clarify that the historic purpose of the First Amendment Religion Clauses was not to stifle voluntary association for the purpose of engaging in religious activities." Religious content, said the brief, does not abrogate the "valuable civil rights" of free speech and association.

In response, the Supreme Court saw fit to be mute.

LIBERALS, CONSERVATIVES, & TUITION TAX CREDITS

The cloud of inconsistency

DAVID R. CARLIN, JR.

COMMENTING on the opening sentence of Aristotle's *Metaphysics*, "All men by nature desire to know," John Herman Randall, Jr., remarked: "Aristotle never had the privilege of teaching in an American university.."

One sometimes suspects that Leon Festinger, the social psychologist, didn't have the privilege of sufficient acquaintance with American liberals and conservatives when he formulated his celebrated theory of cognitive dissonance. According to the theory, we feel uncomfortable when we hold two conflicting beliefs, and we try to reduce this discomfort by modifying the beliefs in such a way as to bring them into harmony with one another.

This sounds plausible and may very well apply to normal people. But not, I fear, to our two most popular schools of political ideology, both of which are so thoroughly liberated from Emerson's hobgoblin of little minds that they positively thrive on inconsistency. One man's dissonance is another man's soothing harmony.

A case in point is the postures liberals and conservatives have taken on President Reagan's proposal for tuition tax credits for families of students attending private schools; or more generally, the positions both camps take regarding any scheme for underwriting private schools with public money. Liberals, of course, oppose such schemes, while conservatives by and large support them; but for neither side is its position consistent with certain more general principles it proclaims.

Liberals, in the tradition of Mill's essay *On Liberty*, favor freedom and diversity in society: individual uniqueness and cultural pluralism. You'd think, then, that public support for private schools would be right up their alley, since it would encourage the creation of schools having a wide variety of intellectual, moral, religious, political, ethnic, and social class orientations.

Conservatives, by contrast, so far from wanting more freedom and diversity, fear we have too much already. The consensus on which society rests, they believe, is being eroded, leading to disorder and conflict at the social level and feelings of alienation and anomie in individuals. You'd think, therefore, they'd panic at the prospective mushrooming of private school experiments and would do all in their power to preserve the near-monopoly the public schools currently possess along with the pedagogical and curricular homogeneity this monopoly brings in its train.

Instead we see the party of freedom standing four-square against diversity and in favor of order and uniformity, while the party of order stands four-square for freedom and against control. Both have written *Whim* on the lintels of their doorposts, thereby refuting cognitive dissonance theory. Q.E.D.

But this will never do. We can't have the Republic's two leading schools of political thought convicted of inconsistency. This may be all right for lesser nations, but not for a

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great power whose foreign policy often depends on exceedingly subtle distinctions that weak minds don't appreciate and attempt to dismiss as logic-chopping, e.g., the distinction between totalitarianism and authoritarianism or that even more subtle distinction between negotiating with the P.L.O. (which of course one never does) and negotiating with them through intermediaries (which one does with worldwide publicity). Should word get out that our nation's logical talents have fallen into a state of disrepair, our credibility will vanish.

So let's begin again. Let's try to redeem the logical honor of our liberals and conservatives by showing, despite appearances, that their respective stands on the aid-to-private-schools issue are, rightly understood, reconcilable with their general principles.

Notice first of all that there are other areas besides schooling in which liberals forget their pro-freedom and conservatives their pro-control stances. While liberals support individualism and even eccentricity in, e.g., sexual matters, they don't extend this tolerance to, e.g., industries which discharge effluents into rivers and streams. Conservatives reverse this. If I may be forgiven for putting it this way, they're more concerned with the discharge of seminal fluids than industrial effluents.

Again, liberals are eager to protect the individual's right to read and say what he pleases, but are ready to limit and control the right of an employer to behave as he pleases to his employees; while conservatives worry more about damaging teen-age minds with disedifying books than damaging teen-age bodies with disedifying working conditions.

In sum, liberals are pro-freedom in things of the spirit (i.e., moral, intellectual, and artistic affairs) but pro-control in regard to material affairs (i.e., business and industry). Conservatives are just the opposite: pro-control in the spiritual, pro-freedom in the material, realm.

JUST WHY this is so and whether these dualisms constitute further internal contradictions for each school are interesting questions, though too large to get into here. Yet however things stand with these larger questions, we now have found a way to get our liberals and conservatives off the inconsistency hook with regard to the aid-to-private-schools issues.

The inconsistency exists only on the premise that schooling is a spiritual thing. If it is, then of course liberals should support the aid proposal and are inconsistent in opposing it, while conservatives should oppose it and are inconsistent in supporting it.

But if we switch premises and assume instead that schooling is a material affair, both inconsistencies vanish. It becomes perfectly appropriate for conservatives, with their nostalgia for laissez-faire in business and industry, to endorse laissez-faire schooling; and it's equally appropriate for liberals, with their hankerings after a semi-socialist state of affairs in business and industry, to fight to preserve our quasi-socialist school system.

But is this fair? Are liberals and conservatives really materialistic about schooling? Do they regard it as essentially a preparation for and handmaiden to our system of business and industry?

Yes. Now and then, to be sure, one stumbles on an eccentric conservative who believes that knowledge, like beauty, is its own excuse for being, or an eccentric liberal who believes that schools ought to be operated in obedience to the categorical imperative inscribed at Delphi: *Know thyself*. But mainstream liberalism and conservatism, despite occasional lip service to these eccentric ideals, really do believe that schooling is essentially a preparation for the world of work. (They used to have a few reservations about this proposition insofar as it applied to the education of girls and young women, who were supposed to be getting prepared for something domestic. But in recent years those last reservations have been swept away.) The disputes between the two camps never challenge this materialistic first premise, having to do instead with disagreements about the best means to this end and about the ideal shape of the economic system itself.

Both sides would agree that Aristotle's archaic opening sentence of the *Metaphysics* ought to be modernized to read thus: "All men desire by nature just so much knowledge as is needed to get them the job they want, but no more."

Though I'm pleased to have been able to dissipate the cloud of inconsistency hovering over our two great schools of political thought on the private school issue — to have been able, at least to that small extent, to do something to redeem their logical honor — I fear other clouds remain, not all of them quite so easily made to disappear, some of them in fact a permanent part of our ideological atmosphere.

In passing it might be mentioned that it's possible a relationship exists between these fallacies and our materialistic view of schooling. Training the national intelligence for the workplace, and only for the workplace, may not be the ideal way of getting ourselves in shape for thinking about large social and political questions. It may be that to think about these questions effectively, or at least more effectively than we've been doing for some time now, we'll have to put aside our economic conception of intellect and replace it with a somewhat more Aristotelian conception.

But that's a discussion for another day.

"To gross materialism!"

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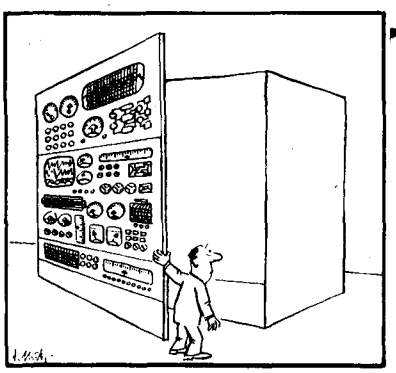

AMERICA WONDERS HOW TO CATCH UP

In math & science, an 'F'

JEREMIAH BARUCH

FINALLY, legislation so good, it can't be refused. A proposal designed to get the economy on a fast, high-tech track; offer future employment opportunities for the young; bridge the trade gap with Japan; strengthen American defense manpower needs; and maybe, someday, cure the common cold. This legislation, promoted by President Reagan, has received the attention of business, professional, and newspaper editorials from across the country. So many key congressional figures have backed this new cure-all that it was among the first major pieces of legislation to be considered by the House of Representatives in the 98th Congress. This wonder program doesn't operate in outer space, doesn't require millions of Western acreage to be dug up, and won't plunge the budget significantly deeper in the red. It's as simple as aid to math and science education.

In his State of the Union address, President Reagan affirmed that, "We Americans are still the technological leaders in most fields. We must keep that edge, and to do so we need to begin renewing the basics — starting with our education system. While we grew complacent, others have acted." After noting that Japan, with less than half our population, graduates appreciably more engineers, the president called for a "quality education initiative" as one of his four major education "goals" (the others being tax-exempt college savings accounts, tuition tax credits, and the school prayer amendment). Aiming to encourage "a substantial upgrading of math and science instruction," Mr. Reagan proposed a block grant to the states: funds to the states for this general purpose and used largely at their discretion.

The president steadfastly maintains that elementary and secondary education is a state and local responsibility, a concern he claims is not being adequately addressed. On March 8, before five hundred prize-winning science and math students in Florida, Mr. Reagan said that the United States is in danger of falling behind West Germany, Japan, and the Soviet Union in scientific advancement unless the nation's educational quality improves.

Unlike the U.S., the central government of these industrialized nations significantly determines the curriculum, sets national examinations, and inspects the quality of instruction. As a matter of national policy, they promote comprehensive science and math for everyone, not only those planning to specialize. Statistics indicate the end result; Japanese and Soviet students get at least two more years of science and math than do American students. Since 1970 there has been a trend in the U.S toward a reduction in high school graduation requirements — only one-third of America's sixteen thousand school districts require more than one year of math and science for graduation. The growing needs of high-technology and energy-related industry run afoul of declining math and science skills. A.T. & T. alone spends $6 million a year to train 14,000 employees in basic arithmetic and writing skills during office hours. Hundreds of other U.S. corporations also report deficient math skills across a wide range of jobs classification. According to a 1980 presidential report on science and engineering, the United States now ranks fourth — behind the Soviet Union, West Germany, and Japan — in overall scientific literacy.

The average SAT math score in the United States continues to decline, from 502 in 1963 (the post-Sputnik high) to 466 in 1981. Between 1975 and 1980 remedial math enrollment in public colleges has increased ten times faster than enrollment. One reason for this decline in student performance has been the loss of qualified math and science teachers. The graduation of secondary school teachers has declined during the last decade by 64 percent in science and 78 percent in mathematics. The schools in 1980 lost five times as many science and and math teachers to industry as to retirement. By December 1981, half of the math and science teachers were deemed unqualified by the National Science Teachers Association.

The president has focused his attention on the math and science teacher shortage as the major problem of the educational system. His budget submission to Congress allocates $50 million for each of four years to the Department of Education for block grants to the states for scholarships to college graduates who can become qualified to teach secondary math or science in one year. The funds are to be distributed on the basis of the number of high-school age children residing in each state. Those states wishing to receive a grant would be required to submit an annual report describing how the state or local education agency — whichever operates the program — would distribute the funds. Scholarships would be for $5,000 for twelve months, and recipients would have to agree to teach

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for a reasonable period of time — to be worked out between the individual and the local or state education agency. Also proposed in the president's budget is an increase of $5 million over last fiscal year for the National Science Foundation's (NSF) secondary school science and mathematics improvement program.

IS THERE an irony to the president's proposal? Perhaps. The president's consternation at American complacency may reflect, to a degree, a situation of his own making. His fiscal 1982 budget sought virtual elimination of the NSF math and science education program (almost half of NSF's entire budget was once consumed by science education). In the last two years the administration has chipped away to the remaining funds to the point that only $15 million would be left in 1983 for graduate fellowships for secondary math and science teachers, as compared to $81 million in 1981. (President Carter had asked for a FY 1982 funding level of $111.9 million.) Now the president has decided that this NSF program should again be built up — albeit by a relatively small amount. Why the change of heart?

One factor may be the politics of the 1984 presidential election. Over the last two years, the list of senators introducing or co-sponsoring math and science education bills has looked like an Iowa Democratic caucus checklist — Senators Cranston, Glenn, Hart, and Hollings. Obviously the president also sees advantages in positioning himself as an advocate of a high-tech economic renaissance rather than as a protector/protectionist of industry.

Another impetus for the change of heart may be that the president's leadership image has not been served well when the bandwagon on the Hill doesn't play to his tune. The momentum for math and science education assistance has been gathering throughout last year — notwithstanding President Reagan. He won few friends with his written message to a May 1982 conclave of scientists, educators, and business leaders called by the National Academy of Sciences to examine weaknesses in the way math and science are taught in elementary and secondary schools. While deploring the fact that science and math education had reached such an unhappy state that it threatened the nation's military and economic security, the president offered no major administration role.

Congress, meanwhile, has seen fit to ride the defense preparedness and economic development issues for all their worth. Eleven bills have been introduced in the Senate alone so far this year. Senator Gary Hart (joined by Senator Hollings, among others) has introduced his math and science education bill as the "American Defense Education Act," an apparent offspring of the Daddy of federal aid to education — the National Defense Education Act of 1959 which was America's answer to Sputnik. Legislation offered by Senator Claiborne Pell (joined by Senator Cranston, among others) has been entitled the "Education for Economic Security Act," and Senator Paul Tsongas has introduced the "High Technology Morrill Act" — harking back to the Morrill Act of 1862 which created the land grant college system.

Chiefly, the Hart bill calls for participating local school districts to be entitled to a basic payment of two percent of the average per pupil expenditure in the state, with an incentive of an additional two percent payment for those districts which demonstrate that their programs met the proposed goals for the year to improve instruction and student achievement in math, science, communication skills, foreign languages, and technology. (You may well ask what's left out.) Mr. Pell's measure provides, on a matching funds basis, grants to the states to upgrade instruction in math, science, computer learning and instruction, foreign language, and vocational education. Tsongas's High Technology Morrill Act establishes matching federal assistance for joint initiatives of private industry, educational institutions, and state governments to strengthen science, engineering, and technical education. Under the bill's guidelines, a project would be eligible for the 50 percent matching federal grant, if private industry contributes 20 percent, and states 30 percent, of the total cost. The bill would receive its funding from 3 percent of the revenues from the sale of energy and minerals resources on federal lands — hence the historical allusion to the Morrill Act.

Other Senate bills focus primarily on the math and science teacher shortage. Senator Pete Domenici has introduced a proposal establishing merit scholarships for college students and an award program for teaching excellence conducted by the National Science Foundation. Senator Christopher Dodd's bill authorizes financial assistance for a continuing education program to increase competency, and Senator Glenn has introduced a measure which provides for low-cost loans to college students. All of these Senate bills have been referred to the Senate Labor and Human Resources Committee, whose Chairman, Senator Orrin Hatch introduced Mr. Reagan's proposal, the Science and Mathematics Teacher Development Act, on March 8.

There have also been attempts to address the problem through the tax code. Certain Senate measures have been referred to the Senate Finance Committee (the Ways and Means Committee for comparable bills introduced in the House). For instance, another Glenn proposal (which was originally introduced by Representative Dave McCurdy in the House) provides federal income tax credits for industries participating in a joint employment program, or sharing equipment with educational institutions. Senator Charles Grassley's bill amends the tax code to encourage contributions of equipment to post-secondary vocational education programs and to allow a credit to employers for vocational education courses taught by an employee without compensation and for temporary employment of full-time vocational educational instructors. The principle of tax credits for equipment contribution has perhaps received the most publicity in the "Apple Bill" (named because of the promotion given by the computer firm), introduced in the House and Senate last session and reintroduced this year, which allows income tax deductions for corporations that donate computers to primary and secondary schools.

An alternative approach, directed specifically at national

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defense needs, was introduced on March 14 by Senator Strom Thurmond. (Its House companion was introduced by Representative Charles Bennett.) Referred to the Armed Services Committee, this proposal establishes a program to provide high school graduates with technical training in skills needed by the Armed Forces in return for a commitment for enlisted service.

THE HOUSE IS already much further along in addressing the math and science problem since it considered and passed H.R. 1310 on March 2, by a vote of 348-54. H.R. 1310 contains two titles. Title I is the Emergency Science and Mathematics Education Act, contributed mostly by the Education and Labor Committee. The measure authorizes $250 million in FY 1984 for a new state program of grants from the Department of Education to improve math and science education at the elementary and secondary levels. At least 75 percent of each state's funds must be allocated to local education agencies. The primary use of these funds is to improve instructional skills and knowledge of teachers throughout in-service training programs and to recertify teachers of other subjects as math and science teachers. After meeting teacher training needs, local authorities may use funds appropriated under this provision for curriculum development, for the acquisition of instructional materials and equipment such as computers, and for joint programs with other public and private agencies. Twenty percent of the funds granted to state agencies are to be reserved for an incentive grant program in which any public or private local funds would be matched on a fifty-fifty basis by state funds for activities such as private-sector training of teachers or private-sector instruction programs in schools. An additional five programs are authorized to improve post-secondary education in mathematics, science, and foreign languages (the latter a contribution of foreign-language advocate Rep. Paul Simon), including $20 million for five thousand teaching scholarships in the 1984-85 academic year. Recipients will be required to teach two years for each year of scholarship assistance received, or repay the scholarship with interest.

The second title, the National Engineering and Scientific Personnel Act, drawn up by the Science Technology Committee, authorizes $100 million for an Engineering and Science Personnel Fund to be administered by the National Science Foundation. The fund sets as a national policy the maintenance of an adequate supply of technical, engineering, and scientific personnel, and the monies would be used for grants matching private or public funds on a fifty-fifty basis in such activities as research in engineering, science, and technical fields; for two-year and community college faculty development in high technology and scientific fields; for programs to promote the use of industrial personnel and resources in education programs; and for the promotion of public understanding of science and mathematics. H.R. 1310 also includes requirements that state and local authorities ensure the full participation of women, minorities, and private-school children in these programs.

The House bill, incorporating two separate titles, reflects its parentage in two different committees. A math and science education bill almost passed in the lame duck session, but was stymied by a conflict between the House Education and Labor Committee and the House Science and Technology Committee. The Science Committee, chaired by Rep. Don Fuqua, sought exclusive claim over the measure by choosing to distribute funds through NSF — which is under its jurisdiction. The Education Committee, under the leadership of Chairman Carl Perkins, fought for and gained shared consideration, amending the proposal to distribute funds through the Education Department — which happens to be within *its* jurisdiction.

The two committees could not come to an agreement in the last days of the session, and the measure died. Determined not to be embarrassed by having an in-house jurisdictional dispute block a major proposal — particularly one given presidential attention — Speaker O'Neill and Majority Leader Wright reportedly got Chairmen Fuqua and Perkins to work out a compromise package after summarily dismissing the administration proposal.

The jurisdictional dispute reflects an underlying conflict between contesting interests seeking a piece of an ever smaller pie. On one side of the table are the natural allies of the Education Committee — classroom teachers and their professional associations and unions, and local school officials. These groups all support in-service training, curriculum development, fellowships, or loan programs administered by the Department of Education to improve math and science instruction. (The coalition divides over local school officials' support for initiatives such as salary bonuses designed to relieve the math and science teacher shortage — a device not enthusiastically received by the teacher unions.)

On another side of the table are college and university professors and administrators faced with obsolete laboratory and instructional equipment and faculty recruitment and retention problems. These higher education interests tend to line up with the scientific community, with the scientists' professional associations, and with such groups as the American Association for the Advancement of Science, in favoring the Science and Technology Committee and the programs under the administration of the National Science Foundation. The NSF, they feel, is better situated to attend to the needs of the "hard" science. This coalition of university educators and scientists is often aided by the high technology sectors of the private industrial community, who together with the Armed Service are concerned with the immediate need for technical and professional personnel. High technology industries have shown interest in the potential staffing and tax benefits that would arise from proposed cooperative staffing options with educational institutions.

THE ADMINISTRATION opposed the House-passed measure because it feels that the funding level is too high, that there is insufficient targeting of programs, and that the bill would lead to undue federal intrusion into local responsibilities. The administration continues to cite the lack of qualified math and

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science teachers as the major identified problem. Yet the problem is not all that clearly drawn.

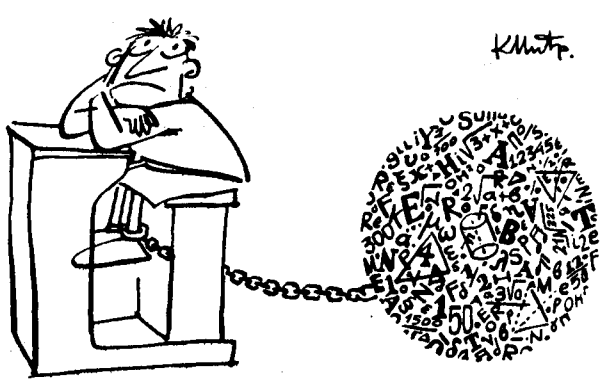
Data from the National Center for Education Statistics, based on a survey of local school districts and an *Education Week* survey of state educational agencies, reveal shortages in certain parts of the nation and surpluses in other areas. Teacher supply and demand data are almost always aggregated by state and do not indicate the degree to which some school districts within a state have a shortage and others a surplus.

Teachers willing to relocate, however, are discouraged by the lack of reciprocity in retirement systems and variations in teacher certification requirements. Mobility between states, and at times even within states, is encumbered by differences among local school salary schedules and restrictions on the amount of prior service determining a new teacher's salary. Any attempt by Congress to impose federal standards in relieving inter-state problems related to teacher certification and retirement would not be favored by independent-minded state and local education officials and would be actively opposed by the administration as unwarranted federal intrusion.

Yet the nation faces the responses of 45 states to a 1981 NSF survey — 43 reported teacher shortages in mathematics, 42 in physics and 38 in chemistry. According to a survey of the National Science Teachers Association, 640,000 children who wanted to take science and math courses could not do so for lack of teachers.

Perhaps the most difficult aspect of the problem is the loss of qualified teachers to higher paying jobs in business and industry. Beginning math teachers with bachelor degrees now earn only sixty percent of what bachelor degrees candidates in math and science earn in private industry. Twenty-five percent of those currently teaching math and science were found by the National Science Teachers Association to be planning to leave the profession for better paying jobs in industry. Any long-term solution to the math and science teacher shortage must take the salary issue into account.

Higher salaries for teachers in short supply such as in math and science have been suggested to the states by Education Secretary T. H. Bell, but this runs counter to the long-held position of the politically formidable National Education Association and the American Federation of Teachers. Furthermore, the great concern over insufficient federal revenues to control future deficits diminishes the prospects of the congressional proposals using the tax code to provide incentives for private industry to allow employees to be used as part-time teachers or for teachers to be jointly employed by both school and private industry. Moreover, the job of a teacher goes beyond lecturing and supervising laboratory work; he or she is also responsible for the maintenance and evaluation of students' progress — important particularly at the elementary and secondary levels. How do these joint-employment proposals affect the profession of teaching?



The administration offers solutions to these larger, long-range problems of getting and keeping high-quality math and science teachers at all levels of education. Its proposal, in the words of Assistant Education Secretary Anne Graham, "would alleviate the immediate high school shortage while giving the nation's educational system time to solve" the underlying problems. And the schools will have to do it without much federal help. The same well-founded worry about huge deficits that makes the administration oppose H.R. 1310 has also led it to call for drastic cuts in federal education programs. More than one-third of the five-year savings the president proposes in federal benefits and services to individuals are to be obtained from education programs — sharply reducing funds for bilingual and vocational education, terminating the Indian education grant program, eliminating certain grants for support services for low-income students, and so on.

In addition to an extensive private education system, there are almost sixteen thousand local school districts (with student populations ranging from ten to a million) within fifty separate state systems with differing certification requirements and varying degrees of control over curricula. The administration takes the leap of faith that a math-and-science policy beneficial to the nation as a whole will somehow arise from myriad state and local decisions.

In fact, this year both Alabama and Kentucky have initiated state-sponsored college loan programs with a "forgiveness provision" for those who enter math and science teaching. (Of course, it doesn't take a math major to figure out that with a 60 percent wage differential, it's still a better deal to enter industry upon graduation and pay back the loan even at a high interest rate.) The Houston school district, where teachers' unions are not particularly strong, supplements math and science teachers' annual pay with an extra $2000. Yet a few isolated incidents do not promise a national effort.

Congress, on the other hand, does have faith in itself as the representative body of the nation. Accordingly, the House bill and many of the Senate proposals directly address the concerns which the president would leave to localities or the market. A Senate controlled by Republicans but full of Democratic presidential aspirants may have a difficult time hammering out a compromise with the administration, on the one hand, and the House bill, on the other. What form the measure ultimately takes will depend upon the degree to which the diverse interested constituencies — teachers, parents, school administrators, professors, scientists, businessmen — let their representatives know that decline in math and science education is a national problem demanding a national response.

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Advertisement

We Can Threaten the Created Order

A Letter to the Bishops on the Peace/War Pastoral

Dear Bishops:

We are grateful to you, our bishops, for having chosen to devote a pastoral letter to the issue of peace and war, the most fateful issue of our time.

The purpose of this letter is to commend you for courage and to express appreciation for the fact that you present the pastoral letter as "more an invitation to continue the new appraisal of war and peace than a final synthesis of such an appraisal." We are thankful for the pastoral letter as a major event in the development of a theology of peace. This letter is a response in which we share with you our ideas as a modest contribution to that development.

Moral About-face

We address ourselves to the second draft of the pastoral "The Challenge of Peace: God's Promise and our Response." We find it heartening in its clear indications of a "moral about-face" on nuclear annihilation. It echoes the warning given by Pope John Paul II in Hiroshima in February 1981: "Our future on this planet, exposed as it is to nuclear annihilation, depends upon one single factor: humanity must make a moral about-face."

Where may humanity look for decisive leadership in such a moral about-face if not to spiritual leaders, and in particular to the spiritual leaders within the nation which developed and made first use of nuclear weaponry? The sorrow you express in the pastoral for this first use, and the penance you call for, evoke a resonance in millions of Americans.

Consensus Already Achieved

We rejoice that you, our bishops, are courageously building on the consensus already achieved by the world's bishops at the Second Vatican Council when they condemned indiscriminate war as "a crime against God and man himself." We realize that you are already being severely critized for drawing the implications of this condemnation. One instance is that you have taken a clear position against a possible first use of nuclear weaponry, thus separating yourselves from the position of our government which now does not commit itself to refrain from first use. It is becoming clear that as your defense of human life becomes a seamless garment, embracing unborn life and the life of noncombatants threatened by war, attacks and criticisms may intensify.

"Just War" in Question

By restating the traditional conditions of the "just war," you remind Catholics that war is supposed to be limited by moral norms. Modern war, however, has escaped moral norms, inflicting immediate mass death and threatening future generations, and even the future itself. You point out that "nuclear weapons particularly and nuclear warfare as it is fought are new moral issues."

For over 1500 years the "just war" criteria have guided Christian consciences with regard to participation in war. They were formulated for wars whose destructive potential bore no resemblance to the wars of our day. If St. Augustine, or even Cicero (on whose teaching St. Augustine drew for his own theory) had been faced with weapons that could destroy millions by fire and make the known world uninhabitable, would they have defended the reasonableness of war and worked out formulations to make it acceptable? The reiteration of just war conditions in the context of modern war confirms the conviction generally accepted by a large part of the public: that nuclear war cannot be justified since just war criteria cannot be met.

Deterrence

In incorporating the UN statement of the Holy See that deterrence "may be judged morally acceptable" you have made it clear, as did the original statement, that such acceptability is linked to positive steps towards disarmament. Our regret at this statement is grounded in our awareness that our planet is being sown with death, and that the United States alone possesses the explosive power of a Hiroshima bomb for every day of every year since the birth of Jesus to the present, with explosive power to spare. We learn that in addition to its arsenal of nuclear and conventional weaponry, our government is planning to construct twenty Trident submarines, the first of which have already been commissioned. When we consider that a Trident submarine carries the destructive power of 2000 Hiroshima bombs and could make an "instant Auschwitz" of 408 population centers in the Soviet Union, we know why our bishops stated that our first duty is to prevent the use of such instruments of death. Inasmuch as our government continues to consider deterrence as a warrant for escalation, we must advert to the provisional nature of the acceptance of the deterrent and to the fact that acceptance hinges on efforts at negotiation and disarmament. The deterrent is thus put under continued moral scrutiny.

Jesus in the Person of the Enemy

The pastoral, in referring to the Catholic tradition of peace

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and war, states, "It reaches from the Sermon on the Mount to the statements of Pope John Paul II." Jesus' central teaching on love extended, in the Sermon on the Mount, to something scandalously new in human history, love of enemies. We are to love even as our Heavenly Father, who lets his sun shine and rain fall on the good and bad alike. Love, as Jesus taught, is made actual in works of mercy, feeding the hungry, giving drink to the thirsty, and sheltering the homeless. Mercy is love responding to need. It is only by the practice of such a life of love that we are saved.

We are moved when we read in the pastoral that "The ultimate ground of peace lies in the love which Jesus both commanded and demonstrated," and that "the ultimate demonstration of Jesus' love is the cross."

Even though as Christians we may make every effort to carry out the works of mercy in our personal lives, we are tempted to feel justified in doing the opposite for the duration of a war. In spite of the fact that we are Christians, as citizens we have engaged in the reversal of every work of mercy, from causing famines, to polluting water supplies and bombing homes and shelters. Those who actually carried out these acts could do so only under orders when others of us under orders paid the necessary taxes. Thus complicity is wide. Jesus has told us that He is the hungry one, He is the thirsty one, He is the homeless, suffering one. Will our surprise be to face Him in our final judgment in the person of the hungry, thirsty, homeless, suffering enemy?

Theology of Peace

The crucial aspect of the pastoral, which comes as a response to the prayers of many, is the opening to the development of a theology of peace for the nuclear age. As spiritual teachers, you tell us, "A theology of peace should ground the task of peacemaking solidly in the vision of the kingdom of God, and it should place it centrally in the mission of the church." When was a theology of peace, in contradistinction to just war thinking, more needed than at a time when, in your words, "We can threaten the created order." It is a time when the story of Noah takes on poignant significance. God's promise came with the rainbow sign that, after the flood, he would not again disturb the operation of the cosmos. Humankind itself, having wrenched the power from the heart of the atom, can now make this earthly home uninhabitable. A theology expressing reverence for life and for creation that came from the hand of a loving Creator will bring hope to many and will stir them out of the paralysis and apathy of fear. You speak for many when you say, "As a people we must refuse to legitimate the idea of nuclear war. Such a refusal will require not only new ideas and new vision, but what the Gospel calls conversion of heart."

Pledge

We pledge to open ourselves to conversion of heart through a program of prayer and fasting, knowing that some evils can be confronted only by such means. In the celebration of the Eucharist, the sacrificial meal of Jesus, the Lamb of God, we will renew our commitment to his way. We ask the intercession of the Mother of God, Mother of Mercy, and Comforter of the Afflicted.

We pledge to make peace a first priority in our lives. Our commitment will include serious study of the pastoral letter itself, and the organization of educational programs, discussions, seminars and retreats around it in schools, in our parishes, and in our communities. The pastoral emphasizes the role of conscience. In our discussions we will try to involve those who conscientiously hold differing views. The recognition of divergent approaches avoids polarization, particularly when the exchange of views is grounded in mutual respect and Christian love. All of us must unlearn old ideas as we learn and develop the new concepts adequate to the age.

In these matters our dependence must be on the Holy Spirit for enlightenment on matters that portend life or death for the human family.

Mary Lou Konacki, OSB, Chairperson Exec. Comm., National Council, Pax Christi • Mrs. Mary Carry, Treasurer, Pax Christi • Dr. Gerard A. Vanderhaar, Exec. Comm., National Council, Pax Christi • Paul Mazur, National Coordinator, Pax Christi • Mary Evelyn Jegen SND, past National Coordinator, Pax Christi • Eileen Egan, founding member, Pax Christi

PAX CHRISTI has as its primary objective "to work with all people for all humankind, always witnessing to the peace of Christ. Its priorities are: Disarmament, A Just World Order, Primacy of Conscience, Education for Peace, Alternatives to Violence. PAX CHRISTI is the U.S. branch of the International Catholic Movement for Peace with headquarters in Antwerp, Belgium. There are branches in many European countries and Australia.

PAX CHRISTI
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☐ I wish to add my name to this letter.
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Screen

UNSUNG HEROES

ROBERT DUVALL IN 'TENDER MERCIES'

IN 1963 ROBERT DUVALL made his first screen appearance in *To Kill A Mockingbird,* where he played the harmless idiot of whom the children were so frightened. The adaptation of Harper Lee's novel for the film was written by Horton Foote, and nine years later, around the time that Duvall was achieving national recognition as the loyal, ruthless *consigliari* in *The Godfather*, he and Foote worked together again on another adaptation. This was of a William Falukner short story entitled *Tomorrow*. Duvall played the lead role of a poor Mississippian who falls in love with an abandoned, pregnant girl. This quiet, simple character might almost have been an enlargement upon the one Duvall had played in *Mockingbird. Tomorrow* was a modest black and white movie. It received only limited distribution upon release and has practically been forgotten since then. But now Duvall and Horton Foote have teamed up once more, this time with Australian director Bruce Beresford. The film they've made is *Tender Mercies,* and the character of the country-Western singer that Foote's original screenplay contains is yet another elaboration upon the first role Duvall ever played in a movie.

When Duvall's name is mentioned, the roles that probably pop into our minds first are those of the swaggering military officers he has played in recent years—the Air-Cav veteran who parades up and down a beach under fire in *Apocalypse Now,* or the Great Santini, in the film of the same name, who drives his family as hard as he does the fighter-bombers he flies for a living. I suspect that these are not the roles of which Duvall himself thinks first, however. It is the less noisy roles of Bo in *Mockingbird* and Jackson Fentry in *Tomorrow,* and now Mac Sledge in *Tender Mercies,* in which Duvall takes the greatest pride. Communicating the characters of these taciturn men required Duvall to work in many sub-textual ways. They presented the greatest challenge to him as an actor. Since he has returned to this role every ten years or so, enlarging it each time, you might say that it is a benchmark by which he has been measuring his career.

The best scene in *Tender Mercies* is one where Mac is reunited with his daughter (Ellen Barkin) whom he hasn't seen in years. His ex-wife has kept them apart, and now Mac is remarried. The meeting is awkward, hesitant, tentative. At last his daughter gets up to leave. But then she thinks of one thing more she wants to say. She has a dim memory of being sung a song with a part about a dove in it: didn't he used to sing that to her? He says that, no, he doesn't know anything about it, maybe it was somebody else. This exchange seems to be just the last of many missteps in their reunion, a final and rather minor failure of memory to make up for absence. Still, there is some glimmer of recognition in Mac's face. Duvall has a wonderful capacity to imply the presence of a feeling without giving away what it is. Even as Mac's words dismiss his daughter's memory, something in his tone and look acknowledge it. After she has left, he stands by the window, his face turned away from us, and in a flat, toneless voice sings "On the Wings of a Dove."

Tender Mercies is, as this scene suggests, a movie about songs unsung. It's about a country and Western singer who hasn't performed in a long time. In the course of the plot, he makes a comeback; yet the movie contains very little singing. This is not because the music doesn't mean anything to Mac. He's not a character out of Altman's *Nashville,* a cynical pop star of the type we may suspect most country-Western singers to be today. On the contrary, certain songs mean almost too much to him. That's why he can't sing the one his daughter remembers, and also why he is hesitant about going back to doing in public the songs he writes. Except for one occasion near the film's end, his songs are sung only in bits and pieces in the soft, untrained monotone of Duvall's own voice. This gives them a power they wouldn't have had on a concert stage, for it gives them an intimate, reticent quality appropriate to the emotions people feel in this film.

In a way, *Tender Mercies* is the story of a single song. It's called "You're the Only Dream I've Ever Had," and it's about Mac's second wife Rosa Lee (Tess Harper). As the movie opens, she's standing outside one of the cabins she rents next to her gas station on a Texas highway. Inside, Mac is involved in a drunken brawl in which he hits bottom so hard he doesn't bounce. When he comes to, he can't pay the bill. She lets him work off the damages, and then let's him stay on to pull himself together again. This "tender mercy" she shows him is what inspires the song, so there's a certain irony, and something rather poignant, in the fact that he tries to get his first wife, who's still on top as a singer, to record it. After he's married Rosa Lee, that's the only way he can think of to bring a little money into the house. We can *see* what the words in the song mean to him, even if they do sound, as he himself says at one point, kind of "corny."

That he should take such a disinterested view of a song he had to go through so much pain to write is also typical of him. At the same time that his songs touch him too closely, they are something about which he is very detached. The same is true of all his experiences. One day a reporter comes into the gas station hoping to get an interview from Mac: next it's a group of young musicians who want to pay their respects and tell him how much his songs meant to them. Although reluctant to talk about the past, he responds to these strangers openly. Yes, he had money and fame as a singer once, but now he's "lost it." What "it" refers to—whether it's only the money or also his talent he fears he's lost—is unclear. But there is in his straightforward manner a touch of sadness and wisdom, of resignation, as if he were talking about someone else's troubles instead of his own. Although he doesn't take the revivalist church that Rosa Lee attends very seriously, he is, as they might say, "bearing witness" to his own life.

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Duvall manages to suggest beneath Mac's terseness a great stoicism and strength of character. The songs left unsung and the words unspoken are all signs of his substance. It's not just with strangers that Mac seems to be speaking of somebody else when he talks about himself. Even with Rosa Lee he has this paradoxical way, this circumspect directness. She is a widow, and after he has worked as her hired hand a while, he asks her whether she has ever thought of remarrying — not marrying him, just remarrying. He looks away as he does so, masking his shyness as a general speculation, as if he thought he'd get an answer by gazing off into the distance rather than from her. Nor does he press her for the answer by the scene's end.

This question is posed near the beginning of the film, during a prelude of elliptical scenes that establish their relationship. At the time, they're standing in a vegetable garden they keep together behind the cabins. They're back in that garden again at the film's conclusion. It's become a bit of an Eden for them, a place where their innocence with each other is renewed. And this time Mac is posing imponderable questions to which he doesn't ever expect answers. A lot has happened for which Mac cannot understand "the reason why," but just asking the questions is a way to work through the pain he's in. Again, he sounds almost as if he's talking about someone else, or meditating on life in general rather than his personal sorrows. The rhetorical nature of the questions gives the scene a ritual quality. We realize here what we have been seeing all along: that Mac lives his life with a solemnity and formality, a deference to life itself, of which only the poor seem to be capable. In this scene, especially, Mac reminded me of Jackson Fentry, the Mississippian Duvall played eleven years ago in *Tomorrow*. Fentry was a man whose life was so limited and elemental, it was almost beneath language. It had much the same subtance that Mac Sledge's has.

COLIN L. WESTERBECK, JR.

A COLLEGE INTRODUCTION TO PHILOSOPHY & THEOLOGY

What would you recommend?

A LONGTIME SUBSCRIBER, William Talbot, senior editor at Samuel French, Inc., recently wrote us with an idea. Said he: "I suggest that as a service to your readers you publish a list of recommended works in contemporary philosophy and theology from first-through-fourth college-level years. I daresay you have many readers of my generation (thirty-five years a subscriber) who have children attending secular universities who have no knowledge of contemporary Catholic philosophy and whose colleges have no Newman Club to fall back upon. To whom can an old neo-Scholastic appeal but to you? And besides, I think it would be a good idea for a brush-up for me, too."

Some kind of answer to Mr. Talbot's appeal seemed like a good idea, so we passed on his plea to four Commonweal *authors and asked for their help in the form of a list of a dozen or so books. One of them, Father Robert J. Egan, S.J., sent along with his listing of books a covering letter describing the possibilities and problems involved in making a good list. It seemed extremely helpful, especially since all the contributors appeared to share similar reservations; we pass it on to the reader, therefore, and it is printed immediately below, followed by all four lists. Our thanks to Mr. Talbot and the contributors.*

THE EDITORS

Robert J. Egan

FATHER ROBERT J. EGAN, S.J., *teaches spirituality and fundamental theology at the Jesuit School of Theology in Berkeley, California.*

HERE, WITH HESITATIONS and misgivings, is the list of recommended books I promised. I discussed this issue with several of my friends and it proved an interesting and thought-provoking exercise. But it raised questions not easy to answer. In the years since your reader was in college, Catholic philosophy and theology have moved very rapidly in many different directions. I doubt that any dozen books could provide a complete (much less impartial) picture of what's been happening.

Furthermore, it could be argued that the best way of providing a solid background in Catholic thought would be through reading classic texts from the whole history of the church—the Bible, selections from the Greek and Latin Fathers, from the great medieval mystics, theologians, and poets, from representative figures in the modern and contemporary periods, along with some commentaries and general historical works—but I don't see how this could be done in a dozen or so books. And even if one could decide on twelve Great Books from the last two thousand years, it would be silly to recommend these without attention to their historical contexts, their sources and presuppositions, the lives and personalities of their authors.

In fact, there is a kind of *art* involved in recommending books to people, but this depends on some concrete knowledge of the people who are asking. I can imagine myself making up very different lists for different people. And it might well seem better in responding to the interests of particular students to recommend a book of poetry or biography, for instance, but this is not exactly what your reader was after. Finally, what a Catholic student at a secular university needs most is a community, some other flesh and blood Catholics living intellectual lives

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and practicing their faith. No reading list will substitute for that.

This raises for me the question: Can Catholicism survive in the U.S.A. as an ethos and dynamic religious culture without finding new ways of educating its young men and women in the full richness of its tradition? Where will these students ever go to read the sayings of the Desert Fathers, the works of Gregory of Nyssa or Augustine, the Victorines, Aquinas, Julian of Norwich, Duns Scotus, Dante, Eckhart, Theresa of Avila, John of the Cross, and so on down to Newman, Blondel, Von Hügel, Maritain, Marcel, Teilhard de Chardin, or Congar? Where and how will they gather to read lives of the saints, histories of the church, studies of the Bible? Or to reflect on the history of the expressions of faith in music, painting, sculpture, literature, or architecture? What is needed is some places and occasions for such pursuits. But where Newman Clubs *do* exist, is this what goes on there? Or even at Catholic universities?

So what I've put down here does not really "provide a solid Catholic philosophical and theological background," as you requested, but one among many possible ways for a young Catholic to begin a more intensive and systematic reflection on the faith. With one exception, I've limited myself to books published since the end of Vatican II. This is how I've interpreted your reader's reference to "contemporary Catholic philosophy" and to his own need for a "brush-up." Also, I've limited myself to Roman Catholic writers, though obviously most important work nowadays is ecumenical. I've chosen books that in my judgment are solid and important on their own merits, but I've also tried to include representative works by some major figures across at least some part of the spectrum of possibilities.

One final point: these books are, for the most part, books of theology. I think that the most exciting and far-reaching conversations, in these last twenty years, have been going on in explicitly theological terms. In any case, it would no longer be possible to characterize "Catholic philosophy" at all. Catholics continue to study and teach philosophy, of course, and to *do* philosophy. Catholic theologians (and historians and sociologists and others) enter into dialogue with various philosophical points of view—Hegel, Marx, Whitehead, Dewey, Heidegger, Wittgenstein, Merleau-Ponty, Habermas, Ricoeur and many others— but I'm certain no one could make many clear statements of wide generality about all this. (And some of my colleagues would dismiss all this with scorn since I haven't even *mentioned* Royce, say, or Freud, or Foucault. . . .)

Anyway, all such lists involve a fictive element, an aspect of purposeful make-believe in the service of shared understanding, like designing a curriculum, constructing a typology, or closing a canon. What follows, with all these qualifications, is my current best effort in this genre.

FIRST, SINCE we shouldn't presuppose a Catholic understanding of what a religion is, what its language refers to, or how its stories and symbols are to be interpreted, I would begin by recommending a good introduction to this subject, like Andrew Greeley's *Religion: A Secular Theory* (The Free Press: 1982). Second, in order to emphasize the social and historical character of religion, the sense of living within a tradition, and because I'm convinced that students only understand what "historical consciousness" means when they begin to think historically about what is going on in their own experience, I would urge them to read James Hennesey's *American Catholics: A History of the Roman Catholic Community in the United States* (Oxford University Press: 1981).

I would next recommend Jean Leclerq's *The Love of Learning and the Desire for God* (Fordham University Press: 1982); a wise and beautifully written book, originally published in 1957, it is still the best introduction I know to the history of Catholic spirituality and its relation to the intellectual life. After that I think I'd recommend William Johnston's *The Inner Eye of Love: Mysticism and Religion* (Harper & Row: 1982), a more recent discussion of spiritual transformation and contemplative experience, which also offers some guidance in the dialogue with non-Christian traditions (here, Buddhism) and some good advice on prayer and meditation. My fifth choice would be Gregory Baum's *Religion and Alienation* (Paulist Press: 1976), a readable and persuasive introduction both to the "political" dimension of Catholic faith, and to the theological significance of "sociology." My sixth choice would be something, or several things, by Thomas Merton—or perhaps Monica Furlong's *Merton: A Biography* (Harper & Row: 1980)—because I think he represents an exemplary Catholic response to the truth and falsity of American culture. My seventh book would be Rosemary Haughton's delightful *The Catholic Thing* (Templegate: 1980), my favorite recent book on Catholic identity, and a representative work by one of our most religiously "musical" writers.

By now these students should be ready for some heavier reading, and a good place to begin is Richard McBrien's large and conscientious *Catholicism* (Winston Press: 1981), a thoughtful review of the whole range of contemporary Catholic thought, complete with summaries, discussion questions, and much useful bibliography. My ninth choice would be Gustavo Gutiérrez's *A Theology of Liberation: History, Politics and Salvation* (Orbis Books: 1973), which has become a classic work in this historic and profound religious movement, which bears in such a special way on the minds and consciences of American Catholics. Tenth, I would recommend Hans Küng's *On Being a Christian* (Wallaby/Pocket Books: 1978); the most impressive general apologetic by a Catholic author in the years since the Council, it represents much of what is good, but also perhaps some of what is off-kilter in presentday liberal Catholicism. My eleventh choice is Edward Schillebeeckx's *Jesus: An Experiment in Christology* (Crossroad: 1981), a wonderful book by this kind and brilliant man, which for all its astonishing display of scholarship manages to mediate a fresh encounter with the mystery of Jesus and what he makes possible

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for human life, and along the way provides good introductions to contemporary New Testament interpretation and historical research. (The serious student will want to go on to read the second and promised third volumes of this trilogy.) My twelfth choice would be Karl Rahner's *Foundations of Christian Faith: An Introduction to the Idea of Christianity* (Crossroad: 1982), a powerful statement of the basic vision of this man, who is arguably the most important and most influential Roman Catholic theologian of this century; it can be studied alongside the excellent study-guide, *A World of Grace*, edited by Leo O'Donovan (Seabury: 1980).

Finally, if the students were still coming back for more, I'd recommend they undertake two brilliant but difficult general works by North Americans: Bernard Lonergan's pathbreaking *Method in Theology* (Seabury: 1979), and David Tracy's generous and erudite *The Analogical Imagination: Christian Theology and the Culture of Pluralism* (Crossroad: 1982).

Daniel C. Maguire

DANIEL C. MAGUIRE *is a member of the theology faculty at Marquette University. His books include* Death by Choice, The Moral Choice, *and* The New Subversives: Anti-Americanism of the Religious Right (*Crossroad*).

AS THE OVERARCHING criterion for this impossible task, I seize upon this line from Gibran: "Keep me away from the wisdom which does not cry, the philosophy which does not laugh, and the greatness which does not bow before children." My list, inspirited by this comment, follows:

Stephen Charles Mott, *Biblical Ethics and Social Change* (Oxford University Press, paper, 1982) and, John Howard Yoder, *The Politics of Jesus* (Eerdmans, 1972). Herein lies everything that Karl Marx did not know about the social passions and the subversive economic force of biblical religion.

Denis Hickey, *Home From Exile: An Approach to Post-Existentialist Philosophizing* (University Press of America, 1982). Hickey opens this new look at philosophy saying: "Each man must write in his own hand, inked by his own lifeblood, the unending novelty of philosophy," and he meets this standard with reverent and irreverent creativity and sprightly brightness.

Hans Küng, *The Church* (Doubleday, Image Book, 1976). More than any Küng book, this one should have jostled the plumage of paleomorphic Vaticaners with its restudy of the church from the Bible up.

Robert McAfee Brown, *Theology in a New Key* (Westminster, 1978). Here is the primer for the main events in liberation theology from a Christian who never fails to write with depth, passion, and style.

Charles E. Curran, *American Catholic Social Ethics: Twentieth-Century Approaches* (University of Notre Dame Press, 1982). An exemplary Catholic scholar shows how the contemporary Catholic justice and peace movement did

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Mimicking Sisyphus: America's Countervailing Nuclear Strategy

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not come from nowhere.

James P. Mackey, *Jesus the Man and the Myth* (Paulist, 1979). A sensitive study in the new Christology showing that much faith *in* Jesus missed the faith *of* Jesus, making both God and Jesus the losers.

Pope John Paul II, *On Human Work (Laborem Exercens)*, with Gregory Baum's commentary, *The Priority of Labor* (Paulist Press, 1982). A touch of judicious papal socialism which critiques the inhumanities of both capitalism and Communism — an encyclical that has fallen with all too dull a thud in Catholic quarters.

Rosemary Radford Ruether, *New Woman, New Earth, Sexist Ideologies and Human Liberation* (Seabury Press, 1975). For penetration into the salvational and revolutionary depth of emerging feminist consciousness, read this — or anything else by Rosemary Ruether.

Mary Daly, *Beyond God the Father* (Beacon Press, 1973). A must book for all who were raised thinking masculinity to be the sacrament of encounter with God. The sturdy of heart may proceed to Daly's *Gyn Ecology* (Beacon, 1978) for a furious, radico-radical, and Nietzschean assault on the macho-masculine blight.

Swallowing my modesty in a gigantic gulp, I list my *The Moral Choice* (Winston, 1979) as a catholic and Catholic effort to give a compleat method of moral choice in gentle idiom.

Monika K. Hellwig

MONIKA K. HELLWIG *is a professor of theology at Georgetown University. She has written, among other books,* The Eucharist and the Hunger of the World, Death and Christian Hope, *and* Understanding Catholicism (*Paulist*).

CONTEMPORARY Religious Thinkers, introduced and edited by John Macquarrie (Harper, 1968). This anthology will help the reader understand what has happened to that firm Thomistic frame of reference we seem to have lost.

Reading the New Testament, by Pheme Perkins (Paulist, 1977). This is a very gentle introduction to the contemporary approach to Scripture, not at all iconoclastic, including bibliography, audio-visual bibliography, and glossary of terms.

A Concise History of the Catholic Church, by Thomas Bokenkotter (Doubleday Image, 1979). The author sets out the history of the church in a way that explains a good deal of the tension, conflict, change, and new focus in our own times.

Understanding Catholicism, by Monika Hellwig (Paulist, 1980). I wrote this for just the sort of people for whom we are making this list, intending a non-controversial contemporary exposition of the faith, and basing it upon the doctrinal synthesis that seems to me to underlie the *Spiritual Exercises* of Ignatius.

Jesus is Lord! A Basic Christology for Adults, by Thomas Zanzig (St. Mary's Press, Winona, Mn., 1982). While most of the contemporary Christologies are written with the reaction of other theologians too much in mind, this one is a remarkable exception which with utmost clarity introduces the non-specialist to the current rediscovery of the historical Jesus as the Christ of faith.

Jesus before Christianity, by Albert Nolan (Orbis Books, 1978). It may be helpful to read this after Zanzig because Nolan presents in some detail a political interpretation of the role of Jesus in his own times, and the evidence on which he bases it, both of which go to the heart of some contemporary issues in the church.

Models of the Church, by Avery Dulles (Doubleday, 1974). Anyone who missed this book when it came out will probably still find it very helpful because it uncovers in a low-key but masterful way some of the "hidden agenda" in many of the conflicts within the contemporary church, by showing the inner logic and historical justifications of the different ways different people think about the nature of the church and its task.

The Book of Sacramental Basics, by Tad Guzie (Paulist, 1982). This book offers quite a fresh, experimental, family-centered approach to the sacramental life of Christians, and of Catholics in particular.

Doors to the Sacred, by Joseph Martos (Doubleday, 1981). Hailed by some critics as controversial, this very ambitious historical account of the sacraments and their theological explanations, although stripped of its extensive footnotes before publication, will reward the reader with a far deeper and more tolerant understanding of the sacramental activities of the churches.

World of Grace, ed. by Leo O'Donovan (Seabury, 1980). A group of authors who have collaborated over a period of years have contributed essays to explain to the ordinary reader the thought of the most influential contemporary Catholic theologian, Karl Rahner, whose original work is for the most part quite inaccessible to the non-specialist.

The Mystical and Political Dimension of the Faith, ed. by Claude Geffre and Gustavo Gutierrez, (Herder, 1974). Readers who are puzzled or dismayed by the acrimony of debates over "liberation theology" will find a series of short, easily understood essays in which the "liberation theologians" themselves explain what they are trying to do.

Faith Meets Faith, ed. by Gerald Anderson and Thomas Stransky (Paulist, 1981). This is a collection of reprints of significant articles explaining the wider contemporary ecumenism which may be puzzling some Christians.

David Burrell

FATHER DAVID BURRELL, C.S.C., *teaches philosophy and theology at Notre Dame. His books include* Analogy and Philosophical Language (*Yale*) *and* Aquinas: God & Action (*Notre Dame*).

I SHALL DIVIDE my selections topically, listing first a philosophical work and then one or more theological treatments under each heading. Some books recently touted I have judged too "academic" in tone and so likely to put off an intelligent readership who may lack the time or patience to negotiate the hidden shoals of academe. Others I simply may have overlooked. Yet with the exception of my own, where my judgment must be obscured, I can recom-

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mend each of the following for breadth of vision and clear exposition.

It will also be notable that books offering a Catholic philosophical and theological background may or may not be written by Catholics—such is one of the fringe benefits of our ecumenical age. The topics range from basic orientations in philosophy and theology to philosophical and theological treatments of tradition, fundamental ethical perspectives, topical ethical issues, political directions—with special attention to our understanding of Marxism, and spirituality.

On the level of basic issues, I would highly recommend Robert Sokolowski's *God of Faith and Reason* (Notre Dame, 1982) for a work showing how our faith has exploited classical philosophy at its key junctures, with Peter Hodgson and Robert King's collection *Christian Theology* (Fortress, 1982) for basic theological issues. Sokolowski's presentation reflects the experience of a master teacher; Hodgson and King have gathered the work of fourteen contemporary theologians who collaborated for three years at Collegeville to present the "traditions and tasks" of theology today.

Major figures who have shaped our tradition figure in my *Exercises in Religious Understanding* (Notre Dame, 1974). The list includes Augustine, Anselm, Aquinas, and Jung. These are amplified and completed by Diogenes Allen's recent *Three Outsiders: Pascal, Kierkegaard and Simone Weil* (Cowley, 1983), and complemented by the fascinating gathering in Rosemary Haughton's *The Catholic Thing* (Templegate, 1980). For a more doctrinal presentation of the tradition, one will find Richard McBrien's *Catholicism* (Winston, 1980) comprehensive, and Monika Hellwig's *Understanding Catholicism* (Paulist, 1981) admirably presented.

The grounds for ethical reflection are argued trenchantly and provocatively by Alasdair MacIntyre in *After Virtue* (Notre Dame, 1981) and given a specifically Christian orientation in Stanley Hauerwas's *Community of Character* (Notre Dame, 1981). More particular ethical questions are given a traditional philosophical underpinning in Ralph McInerny's *Ethica Thomistica* (Catholic University, 1982) and sensitive theological treatment in Enda McDonagh's *Doing the Truth* (Notre Dame, 1980). MacIntyre and McInerny will each help general readers recover the philosophical culture which has shaped a liberal education, while Hauerwas and McDonagh will show how that can affect the ways we view vexing questions of power, technology and violence, as well as family, sex, and abortion—each within the framework of scriptural narrative and prayer.

Finally, our widespread American ignorance about Marxism, which spawns bogeymen and naiveté alike, is no longer excusable in the light of Nicholas Lash's *A Matter of Hope* (Notre Dame, 1982) and Arthur McGovern's *Marxism: An American Christian Perspective* (Orbis, 1980). While Lash argues the more basic issues against the original and continuing culture of criticism, McGovern considers how that critique has affected practice in the Americas. On the scale of personal

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response Sebastian Moore's *Crucified Jesus is No Stranger* (Seabury, 1977) is completed by Donald Nicholl's *Holiness* (Seabury, 1981). Moore offers a reading of the atonement which makes the part we play in crucifying Jesus ingredient to our faith in him—so undermining both Christian triumphalism and the most virulent historical form of anti-Semitism in one fell swoop. Nicholl incorporates non-western Christian and non-Christian traditions with disarming ease and authenticity, so preparing us to live in the multi-cultural world which we actually inhabit. Neither could be accused of offering us opiates; each insinuates a path to inner liberation. And for a subtle response to Marx which also recovers the powerful western strain of poverty of spirit, see John Dunne's recent *Church of the Poor Devil* (Macmillan, 1982).

Other topics could have been chosen, or I may have missed a splendid work as it is. But the books selected are balanced presentations that will give heart to educated believers searching for ways to take their bearings on our fragmented and fractious world. The preponderance of Notre Dame Press books does not reflect chauvinism so much as their conscious orientation in recent years to work towards the kind of list which matches your request.

Books: THE REAL THOMAS MORE

THOMAS MORE
HISTORY AND PROVIDENCE
Alistair Fox
Yale University Press, $19.95, 271 pp.

STATESMAN AND SAINT
CARDINAL WOLSEY, SIR THOMAS MORE AND THE POLITICS OF HENRY VIII
Jasper Ridley
Viking Press, $20.75, 338 pp.

Dan Herr

A REASSESSMENT of Thomas More as humanist, statesman, scholar, and saint should have been expected. Except for the most reactionary of English critics, More has always had a good press. And Robert Bolt, in his effective play and movie, *A Man for All Seasons*, insured that an idealized More would become our most popular saint next to Francis of Assisi. Thus it was certain that both scholars and icon-smashers would be tempted to take another look and offer a less glorified portrait. After all, hagiography is not a valued art form in our day and we have seen revisionist biographers trim the images of Gandhi, Churchill, John F. Kennedy, Lyndon Johnson, and Martin Luther King. Why should Thomas More escape?

Alistair Fox's probings and Jaspar Ridley's biography have this much in common: they agree that the Thomas More many of us have admired is not the real Thomas More and that the poular image is badly in need of revision.

Fox states his thesis this way: "Both More the saint and More the humanist as scholarship has so far presented them are fictions: convenient, yet increasingly unsatisfying. The recent findings of historians, in particular, suggest that the saintly image that so impressed More's own family masked a deeply involved political activism of which they were barely aware. . . . Scholars have also discovered unresolved problems not only in his doctrinal convictions, but also in his personality. In short, the mounting evidence means that neither of the received myths will any longer do; the study of More must find some way of freeing itself from the impasse into which it has wandered."

Ridley takes an ever tougher stand — and understatement is not his forte. In his preface, he charges that "More's love for his family is largely a myth; . . . the saint was the worst kind of intolerant fanatic, an idealist gone astray, who began as a brilliant intellectual but developed first into a sycophantic courtier and then into a persecuting bigot, before he redeemed himself, at the eleventh hour, by a brave if muted stand for his principles which cost him his life."

Fox, I submit, must be taken seriously, but Ridley I find contemptible, worth as much serious attention as any other spitballer venting his hatred of his betters. He admits to preferring Wolsey ("a great statesman, a man of natural dignity with a generous temperament, who preserved a relatively tolerant regime until he fell from power") to More and would like us to do the same. Unfortunately, his kind of vicious biography will always find a sympathetic press (*Publishers Weekly*, for example) and a certain kind of avid reader.

In a sense More has only himself to blame that scholars are coming up with more information on his thoughts and beliefs than is available on most fifteenth-century Englishmen. He was a prolific writer and, like most writers, told more about himself than he realized. Furthermore, his popularity in our day must have been a strong force in making possible the definitive Yale edition of his complete works which in turn has made it easier for both his friends and enemies to research and attempt to interpret his voluminous writings.

Fox has uncovered what he considers the real More by minutely analyzing More's well-known works (*Utopia* and *The Four Last Things*, among others) as well as such obscure writings as *Letters to Bugenhagen* and *Debellation of Salem and Bizance*.

He tells us that the portrait of young More, for which we have Erasmus to thank — a natural genius, delightfully affable, quick-witted, enthusiastic, "in the world without really being of it" — is, at the very least, incomplete. As his careful study shows, "the early works reflect a capacity for severe melancholy in More, and suggest that he may have been extremely perturbed by a tragic sense of the apparent futility, injustice, and absurdity of the world, the victim of conflicts within his own presonality, and

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highly unresolved as to whether he should laugh or cry at the world, repudiate or join it. . . . He gave vent to sentiments history has tended not to remember in him: bellicose, chauvinistic patriotism . . . often vindictive, sometimes petty, pornographic voyeurism; and antifeminist cynicism."

In the opinion of Fox, "there was, to speak metaphorically, a pendulum swinging throughout More's life. In the course of these early works [the English poems, *Life of John Picus*, *Epigrammata* and translations of the second-century Greek satirist, Lucian] we see it swing from one extreme point to the other: from manichean pessimism to undiluted optimism. It is only when the pendulum swings back to its mid-position that More was able to constrain all the aspects of his personality, his intellect and his impulses into an inclusive synthesis."

This mid-point was marked by the writing of *Utopia*. Despite the attention that has been paid to this classic by literary critics, political theorists, and historians, the unresolved problems inherent in it, Fox submits, can be helped only by approaching it from the direction of More's previous works — an approach which few have chosen to pursue.

We learn that Thomas More regretted *Utopia* after it was too late to stop publication and that it represented "the last occasion on which More succumbed to the temptation of airing the innermost complexities of his private thought in public."

Fox proceeds to offer further insights into the "inner" More by a detailed analysis of his other works — including *The Four Last Things*, *Responsio ad Lutherum* and *A Dialogue Concerning Heresies* — and the political and religious controversies in which More became embroiled. He argues that if More's literary output had ended when he was imprisoned in the Tower, "posterity would have been left with the cautionary exemplum of a man whose life had been an unmitigated tragedy — More is not remembered today for his controversial writings or his behavior during the years when he wrote them. However, this period marks the nadir of his life and works, not the summit of their achieve-

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a·poc·a·lyp·tic *adj.* **1:** foreboding imminent disaster or final doom

prem·ise *n.* **1a:** a proposition supposed as a basis of argument **b:** something assumed

The Apocalyptic Premise: Nuclear Arms Debated

Edited by Ernest W. Lefever and E. Stephen Hunt

The current debate on nuclear arms has focused on their destructive potential rather than on the actual short- and long-term effects on Western security and freedom in the world. Public discussion has often been trivialized by ignorance, naiveté, and deception. Yet, thoughtful voices have not been completely absent. These 31 selections reflect a wide range of views held by political leaders, religious authorities, scholars, policy experts, journalists, and political activists.

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ment. Moreover, had he not undergone it, he could never have attained the remarkable recovery to which his subsequent Tower works testify."

Fox has attempted a balanced critique (unlike Ridley, the More-baiter, who even when describing the night before his execution calls him "this strange, tortured, cruel man.") but it is not the image of Thomas More we have been accustomed to, certainly not an all-seasons man. Other scholars, of course, will have their say and it is certain that the controversy over More is far from ended.

But even assuming Fox's findings are unassailable — what does that do to More's reputation? Do we no longer find him an admirable man? Is he worthy of sainthood?

While there may be those who would be disillusioned, I would submit that this "new" More is a fascinating character worthier than ever of our respect and filled with the stuff that saints should be made of. So he wrestled with the basic problems of existence — surely this is a struggle twentieth-century men and women can appreciate. So he was a complex, inconsistent, enigmatic human being — far easier for moderns to relate to than the simple, verging on simple-minded, More we have known. So he was "immoderate in controversy," used bad language and dabbled in pornography — who would condemn him, certainly not I. So he was guilty of unsaintly actions — we no longer demand perfection from our saints as in the days when we were expected to believe that baby Aloysius Gonzaga refused his mother's milk on Wednesdays and Fridays during Lent.

This is not to excuse his convictions on censorship and his damnable inclination to flog and burn herertics just as we cannot excuse Martin Luther's virulent anti-Semitism. But with both men — More was "in many respects very much like Luther," Fox claims — it is necessary to judge, but not excuse them in the context of their times. Those were not tolerant days, it is safe to say.

In brief, I confess that I prefer the new version of More to the old one.

And one last word: I am happy to note that the revisionists have not tried to take from Thomas More his wit and his sense of humor, traits which I suspect make him unique among the communion of saints.

Can we stand happiness?

FAMILY HAPPINESS

Laurie Colwin

Alfred A. Knopf, $12.95, 272 pp.

Margaret O'Brien Steinfels

"Happy families are all alike; every unhappy family is unhappy in its own way."

YOU HAVE read that sentence before. The first clause holds your attention while you try to imagine the alikeness of happy families, but its plausibility soon fades. Is it their alikeness that is elusive or their happiness? The second clause is the stuff of great literature. *Anna Karenina* opens with that epigram, but so could the works of Dickens, George Eliot, Ibsen, O'Neill, etc. The diverse miseries of unhappy families grow in geometric proportion to the length of novel or play. Happy families whose good spirits we may enjoy at Christmas dinner, we will not endure for 750 pages. A novel about happy families, if it is not ironic, is necessarily brief.

Laurie Colwin's previous novel has the daft title, *Happy All the Time*. The hero, a foundation president, is led in the spirit of courtly love through an excruciatingly protracted courtship while remaining ever hopeful, kind, and loyal. Happy all the time. I finished it smiling.

Family Happiness has some of its bedazzling qualities: not great literature but an extremely satisfying read on a cold Saturday afternoon. In fact, in the spirit of "domestic sensuousness" that Colwin extols in her short story, "The Lone Pilgrim," *Family Happiness* ought to be read while reclining with pillows on a plump old couch handed down from your maternal grandmother. You read, absorbed and silent, wrapped in a nineteenth-century blue and white quilt stitched by a distant cousin on her marriage trip from Philadelphia to Boston in 1854. Colwin is big on families and family heirlooms. The domestic interiors of happy families are crowded with beloved objects. A sure sign of pathology in her fiction is a bare room.

The central proposition of *Family Happiness* is not that the Solo-Miller clan is similar to other happy families, but that the happy family ensemble has a life and rhythm of its own. Its happiness is not the mere sum of individual happinesses, nor

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is its vitality threatened by passing individual miseries. Polly Solo-Miller Demarest, daughter, wife, and mother, occupies the foreground. Her fall from grace and complacent happiness into bewildering unhappiness and her ascent back to a guarded happiness constitute the plot. But her extended family is the background and anchor of the story.

There is one handsome, but distracted, husband; two darling and wise children; a sometime neurasthenic mother; a crank of a father; two grown but pathetically immature brothers; their wives; and "branches in Boston, Philadelphia, and New York, as well as London just like a banking house." Old, established, wealthy — financiers of the American revolution — the Solo-Millers enjoy nothing so much as their own company. The novel opens and closes with their ritual Sunday breakfast eaten at midday: for starters, "heavy white plates of smoked salmon, silver baskets of toast points, dishes of capers, lemon slices and scallions, and a cobalt-blue dish of niçoise olives." The sole difference between the novel's first breakfast and last is that Polly leaves the first early, ostensibly for a meeting, but actually for a brief tryst with her lover, Lincoln Bennett; in the last she does not leave. The story between is not filled with moral drama or passion but a subtle and fine moral suasion in which Polly refuses to find cause for her affair in the sometime neglect of her family. Lincoln Bennett, a recluse and a painter, is simply the first and dearest friend she has ever had. He lives beyond the family's reach.

The Solo-Millers are smug, or so Lincoln informs the uncritical Polly, and at moments are fairly wretched individuals. Still they are appealing; and it is easy to fall in love with the idea of the Solo-Millers. Their tribal life has not been touched by modernization except in small details; they own a Silex coffee pot, but cannot get it to work. Solo-Millers do not leave the family when they marry, their spouses join the family; nor do they divorce or approve of divorce. The apartments of the junior members are glowing satellites circling the parental hearth. They celebrate holidays and spend their vacations together. Their judgments are stern and their forbearance limited.

The matriarch Wendy, née Constanzia Hendricks, and the patriarch Henry Solo-Miller, Sr., preside at the Sunday breakfast as at a high liturgy. A concert or gallery opening is the occasion of a solemn procession and their single yearly attendance at synagogue on Yom Kippur "was with a sense of aristocracy. Anyone could be a Christian. Not anyone could be a Jew, and very few Jews were the sort of Jews the Demarests and the Solo-Millers were. It had been said of

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There is no registration fee for the conference. For further information write to Ms. Judy Messick or Mr. Frank McConnell, Department of English, University of California, Santa Barbara, CA 93106.

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Grandfather Solo-Miller that he behaved as if he had chosen God, and not the other way around." Fealty, constancy, and excellence are the virtues of this clan. In addition, Polly is "sturdy, upright, cheerful, and kind." She is Polly the Good, accomplished and virtuous beyond appreciating. Naturally this condition poses the question that has worried all of us at some time or another, perhaps even Eve herself: is Paradise suffocating?

Polly's fall from grace is the occasion for her seeing, at last, the mixed blessing, but blessings nonetheless, of her tribe. "Family life is deflective: it gives everybody something to do. It absorbs sadness and sops up loneliness. It provides work, company, and entertainment. It makes tasks for idle hands and allows an anxious spirit to hide in its capacious bosom. With no one around her, Polly felt as if she had slipped out of earth orbit."

The possibility that the complacence of her family has pushed her into Lincoln's bed is tested and found wanting. To her plaintive, "I don't want to be the best anymore," her adoring husband, Henry, responds, "You can't help it, it is not something you do. It's something you are." The inevitability of Polly's virtue is like Iris Murdoch's "sovereignty of good" — "something of which saints speak and which any artist will readily understand. The idea of a patient, loving regard, directed upon a person, a thing, a situation, presents the will not as unimpeded movement but as something very much like 'obedience.' "

The ever-tasteful Sturm und Drang of the plot resolved — although her moral dilemma is not; Lincoln remains her lover — Polly sits at Sunday breakfast: "This was her family, her tribe, her flesh. She felt not forced to love them, or condemned to be angry at them, but as if she were merely seeing them. Her place at this table was optional — she did not have to be there if she did not want to. But she did want to."

And later; "Her heart was full of love — for Henry, for Lincoln, for her brother and sister-in-law and parents and for her children." That is not a satisfactory ending, too much having-your-cake-and-eating-it-too. But it is very Solo-Miller. So the epigraph to *Family Happiness* must serve as its conclusion: "God setteth the solitary in families; He bringeth out those which are bound with chains; but the rebellious live in a dry land" (Psalm 68:6).

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BEAT NOT THE POOR DESK

Marie Ponsot and Rosemary Deen
Boynton Cook, $9, 224 pp.

Goeffrey Summerfield

THE HISTORY of composition-teaching in the English-speaking world over the past 200 years or so looks from here like a battlefield: injured, maimed, bleeding demoralized young combatants — generation upon generation — limp away from their encounters with the enemy, and determine to make every effort to avoid any recurrence of such humiliating confrontation.

On closer examination, my metaphor has a limited usefulness: yet, even so, it is not so very far-fetched: 'word-attack' is a not uncommon term among reading-teachers; and we all know, don't we, that the most efficient way to deal with an incompetent writer is to send her to a 'writing-lab.' (I confess I never ventured inside one: do they pour their ink into test-tubes and heat it over a bunsen-burner?)

For too long now, our schools and colleges have involved young beginners in a variety of false options, in activities with their pens that are wrong-headed and counter-productive, in forms of mere slavishness, serving the needs of some obscure and ineffable power usually named as Correctness. Acceptable service, of course, involves conformity to a book of rules, which have to be memorized and *obeyed*. The 'forms of life' — to use Wittgenstein's term — have precious little to do with the real life

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of the spirit, with delight, tentativeness, expressiveness, or the true voice of feeling. One does not have to be a Marxist to see most of this sorry business as a form of alienation.

There have, of course, been voices that spoke sanely in such matters: but by and large they remained unheard, for they spoke against the banausic deeper intentions of a culture committed to more or less 'benign' forms of exploitation: one thinks, for example of the way in which mere clerical skills — clerical in the secular sense — dominated the curriculum for a century of burgeoning commerce.

The larger sub-text, the implicit value system underlying the teaching of composition, had to do with forms of neatly socialized conformist unquestioning behavior.

Finally, however, we are learning that it is possible to re-order our priorities in this matter: that the act of composing can allow for the life, the vivacity, the distinctive energy, of the individual mind and spirit. And at the same time respect the constraints that we must internalize if we are to avoid mere anarchy: "How do I make a poem?" asked an Irish poet." I load myself with chains, and then struggle free." And "To accept the use of a rule" says the philosopher, Rees, "is a way of saying that I am convinced." As in most human enterprises we find a delicate and generative tension between the energies of the psyche and the social patterns of making sense for others. It is from the acknowledgment of such teasing and productive paradox that we are learning to help young writers to find a variety of joys and satisfactions, provoking rigors and gratifying serendipities in

REVIEWERS

DAN HERR *is the chairman of The Thomas More Association of Chicago and was for many years publisher of* The Critic *magazine*

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GEOFFREY SUMMERFIELD *teaches at New York University. His history of rationalism and the imagination in the eighteenth century will be published this year by Methuen.*

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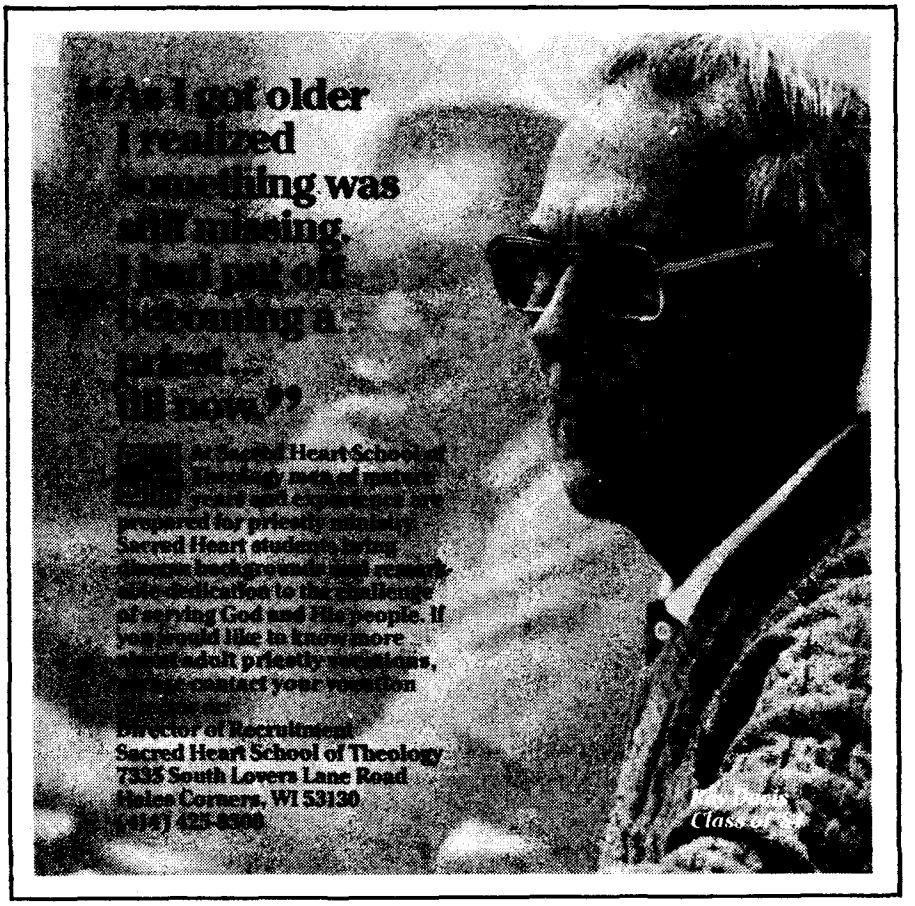

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the making of meaning. Josephine Miles put the matter well, as she is indeed wont to do, when she observed that the shaping of a text 'gives shape and stability to valued materials of life, in order that they be stressed, attended, preserved.' At such levels in the terms of our crucial appeals, a reverence for life is precisely a reverence for the individual life and for its language.

In this respect, there is a tonic note of certainty in the subtitle and text of *Beat Not*: 'Writing: What to teach, How to teach it and Why.' The criterial strength and virtue of the book is to be found in that 'Why' and in the fact that they earn the right to have us listen very carefully, very attentively, to their explicit rationale.

In the jading derivative world of composition-teaching, where most minds seem to live routinely unexamined lives, Ponsot and Deen have produced a strong affirmative statement, one that could precisely not have been produced by a committee: and anyone, in whatever sphere of activity or of inactivity, who is at all tempted to give writing a try or another last chance should simply take this book, to be re-animated by its bracing freshness, its vigor, its power to enable. Not the least of its many virtues is that it is a great book to disagree with: it enters vividly into one's mind, and its voices irresistibly provoke attention: but I find its main virtue to be this: that it takes the life of the mind seriously and embraces all the demanding consequences of such a recognition: it is a very good deed in a naughty world.

Correspondence

(Continued from page 194)

am always made uneasy by our contemporaries who, in highly particular terms, seem readily to discern in the affairs of humankind divine (or Satanic) intervention. This too readily leads to cut-rate prophecy, which abounds in the religious marketplace today.

However, not to be disingenuous, I recognize that you have associated my name with these articles because you believe that what you term "the new Catho-

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lic 'anti-left' " has an allure—what a very odd notion — to which I have succumbed. It is impossible to respond to this in brief compass. I hope to be able to deal with the subject at a later date.

JAMES FINN

'Incredible penalty'

Pittsburgh, Pa.

To the Editors: In a revision of canon statutes [Editorial "The New Code," Feb. 11] Pope John Paul II revised the number of offenses that call for "automatic" excommunication from thirty-seven to seven. Most acts subject to this "automatic" excommunication are violations of ecclesiastic or sacramental laws. For example, this penalty applies to anyone who profanes the eucharist, to clerics who absolve the sins of their own sexual partners, to those who violate the confidentiality of confession, and to those who would ordain a bishop without approval from Rome. An exception to the violations of ecclesiastic or sacramental laws is abortion. Women who have abortions and those who assist them are "automatically" excommunicated. (Acts such as massacres, murder or torture do not warrant "automatic" excommunication.)

In a church where sovereignty of conscience exists it is incredible that such a penalty could be reaffirmed especially when one considers that the hierarchy holds the minority opinion in the abortion debate by believing that there are no circumstances that warrant abortion. Polls show that 77-79 percent of Catholics disagree with the hierarchical position by believing that a woman has a right to choose abortion in some or all circumstances. And statistics show us that approximately 2.1 million U.S. Catholic women have availed themselves of legal abortion since 1973.

Given the great diversity of Catholic opinion on abortion we feel it is cruel and wrong for the hierarchy to have such a penalty. We believe the intent of such a penalty is to harass, confuse and to deny Catholic women the right to use their consciences as their guide if they find abortion to be the right, moral and loving decision. Such a law and its penalty (which we view as unenforceable) shows a hierarchy attempting to tamper with the Catholic woman's conscience. We believe such behavior reflects misogyny and denies women the full richness of spiritual practice in that it does not treat them as full moral agents capable of making ethical decisions.

Although the hierarchy in Rome declared that this new canon code was to be infused with the liberalizing spirit of Vatican II we do not view it as such. We believe that "automatic" excommunication for abortion is in direct contradiction with the Vatican II "declaration of Religious Liberty" in which it was stated "The Christian faithful have the civil right of freedom from interference in leading their lives according to their conscience."

CHRISTINE NIEBRZYDOWSKI
President, Catholics for Choice

P.S. We have recently changed our name from Catholics for a Free Choice to Catholics for Choice. It was changed so that we would not be mistaken as a chapter of Catholics for Free Choice — a national organization located in Washington, D.C. We do, however, support the efforts of that organization and distribute their literature.

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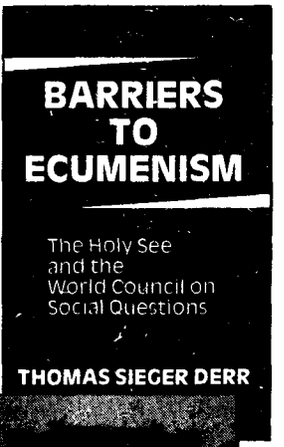

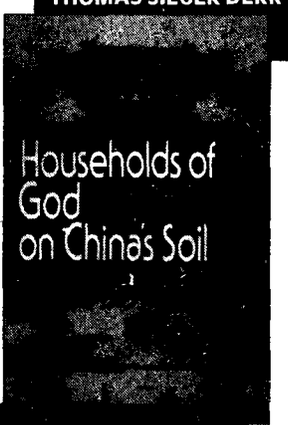

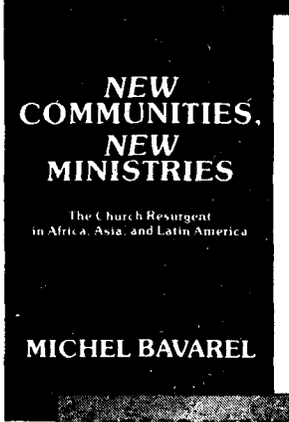

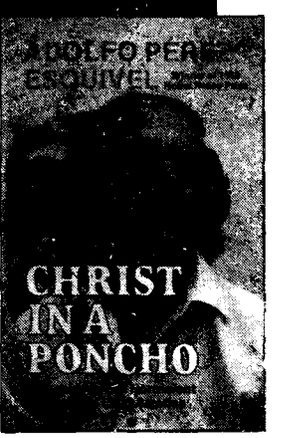

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